

The President "Warns" Europe—an Editorial

The Nation

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The Bonus Army Scares Mr. Hoover

by Mauritz A. Hallgren

Wilson Early for War

A Confidential Document of March, 1916

by C. Hartley Grattan

What I Believe

by Conrad Aiken

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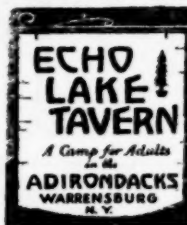
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OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD, EDITOR

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

DEVERE ALLEN

DRAMATIC EDITOR

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

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SO THE FIRST SESSION of the Seventy-Second Congress has come to an end. Few sessions have been as vital, few have called forth as much unwarranted abuse of Congress, and few have witnessed so clear-cut an issue between the Executive and Congress—with the Executive regrettably getting rather the better of it—to the grave detriment of the American principle of three coordinate and independent branches of the Government, the Executive, the Congress, and the Judiciary. This phase of the session has received scant attention. Instead, public interest has been focussed on the bills dealing with the economic crisis. Nothing radical and nothing that goes deep into the causes of our troubles has been accomplished. True, certain relief bills have been passed and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation has been created to ladle out the people's millions to railroads, banks, and other corporations. But only \$300,000,000 has gone to the so-called direct relief of the starving—and that is not direct at all but indirect, being appropriations to be given to States—not even cities—which are in turn to apportion them; the President announces that these loans are not to be resorted to "except as a last extremity," but he is sure that it will be enough to give us "a solid back log of assurance that there need be no hunger and cold in the United States." What humbug! Three hundred millions would last only a very few months if applied at once to the starving.

As for the other \$1,800,000,000, that sum is to be loaned to the States, municipalities, and other public agencies for self-liquidating projects, to limited dividend corporations for housing and to finance agricultural exports with \$136,000,000 for immediate building of roads and trails.

THAT THE GLASS BILL to inflate the currency by \$1,000,000,000 passed in the last hours of the session as an amendment to the Home Loan Bank bill, which appropriates \$300,000 for the organization of a system of eight to twelve government-supervised banks to finance individual home builders, is distinctly regrettable. As we have stated, we cannot see the slightest excuse for adopting this measure, for there has been no shortage whatever of currency as such. We believe that even the discussion of the bill has done harm. Senator Glass himself, in introducing the bill, stated that he did not think it was necessary at this time but that he offered it in order to head off a worse measure of inflation, the Goldsborough bill. Perhaps it will do no further harm if it is allowed to be a dead letter. While it went through, however, Congress unfortunately failed to act on the proposal of one of the few men who have shown statesmanlike qualities in this session, Congressman La Guardia, that Congress should not adjourn but recess until September 15, with semi-weekly meetings from then until November 21. Unfortunately this proposal was not brought before Congress for a vote. It is what the situation calls for; it is dangerous to adjourn Congress until December when we have a President in the White House whose heart is absolutely steeled to the suffering in the country, who appears determined that hundreds of thousands shall die of starvation before they get a dollar directly from the federal treasury. Never was there a time, in our judgment, when Congress so greatly needed the right to reconvene without being dependent upon the call of a hostile Executive.

WHERE WILL the increasingly grave unemployment crisis finally bring us? City after city continues to report that its relief funds are exhausted. The latest is St. Louis, the scene of a serious riot a few days ago. The responsible citizens of St. Louis recognize that something must be done to help the jobless, but no one seems to know where to turn for the necessary funds. At a meeting of public officials and prominent residents, Mayor Miller declared with grave emphasis that "an emergency exists. No more serious difficulty has ever confronted our city." Although it was told that the funds raised earlier in the year had been spent, the meeting adjourned without agreeing upon a definite plan for raising further funds. That task was left to a committee of business men. A few days later a crowd of 3,000 jobless men and women gathered before the city hall to beg for help. Apparently frightened by the desperate appearance of the demonstrators, the police opened fire. Four of the jobless were wounded, and in the rioting that followed six policemen were injured. But what else could one expect? The relief agencies which were feeding 25,000 families on July 1 have had to drop 13,000 since then.

The jobless must choose between starvation and picking up refuse among the dumps of the river front. Indeed, some fifty homeless families have moved down to the river front where they are now living in rude shacks. Many other American cities are in the same tragic predicament. Will some one please notify Herbert Hoover?

HOG PRICES HAVE BEEN RISING for months. Among some of our more optimistic observers this is taken as an almost certain sign of returning prosperity. In any case, as a *New York Times* dispatch from Chicago put it, the livestock boom "is causing the western farmer to smile again." We earnestly wish that this were true, that the farmer had reason to smile, and that the livestock boom was something more than a temporary phenomenon. Unhappily, the signs point another way. For one thing, the price of hogs has its economic basis in the price of corn; when one goes up the other is sure to follow. But for the last few months the price of corn has been falling. This suggests that some temporary, perhaps unhealthy, factor has entered the situation to inflate the price of hogs. Indeed, the *Times* disclosed the real cause in the same dispatch:

When prices were lowest early in the spring apparently no one wanted cattle, hogs, or sheep. Farmers were broke or so nearly so that they were almost panicky in trying to sell their livestock to pay rent, mortgages, and other expenses. It was said to be *one of the best clean-outs the industry has known in years.* [Italics ours].

In other words, the farms were virtually stripped of their marketable livestock. When they had nothing left to sell, the price of hogs quite naturally began to go up. But who has been profiting by this tremendous rise? Surely not the farmers who had to sell on a panic market. If anyone is in a position to profit, it must be the packers.

TWO DECISIONS almost revolutionary in import have recently been handed down by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. Under the first ruling the Wisconsin Telephone Company, serving 102 communities, has been ordered to reduce its rates $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on the ground that the purchasing value of the dollar has increased more than one-third since the last schedule of rates was approved. This increase in the value of the dollar, according to the commission, enables the telephone company to buy its labor and materials, the cost of which fluctuates with changes in business conditions, much more cheaply than it could four years ago, while the subscriber, whose rates for telephone service are fixed, is today "paying very substantially more than he paid for the same service in 1928." Hitherto a "fair return" has been generally considered by regulatory bodies to be governed by static and unchanging factors, but the commission pointed to a ruling of the Supreme Court of the United States holding that a "fair return is a flexible concept," and that rates for utility services must be governed by current economic conditions. Furthermore, the decision suggested that by reducing its rates the telephone company will probably be enabled "to hold the business of that portion of its subscribers who can only afford telephone service if the cost is low." That the cost of telephone service in numerous sections of the country is today beyond the reach of many is indicated by the growing number of subscribers who are having their telephones removed.

THIS TELEPHONE DECISION, because it is a radical departure from the usual practice of State regulatory bodies and because of the possibility that other States may follow Wisconsin's example, has greatly disturbed the utility interests. But much more alarming to the power trust is the second ruling of the Wisconsin Commission. This calls upon seven major utility companies to suspend dividend payments on common stock pending an investigation. The commission said it would not permit the assets of subsidiary public utilities operating in Wisconsin to be drained off for the benefit of holding companies. It emphatically asserted that the customers of the local companies "have a vital interest in dividend payments, especially when capital is impaired or threatened with impairment." This decision is doubtless the greatest blow the power trust has ever received. Local electric, gas, telephone, and water companies have for years been milked by parent corporations and banks controlling or owning their capital stock. It was, indeed, to perfect this process that holding companies have lately been manipulated. State utility commissions have found it difficult to guard against abuses because the holding companies have invariably had their headquarters in other States where they could not legally be reached. If the Wisconsin Commission can now compel operating units to refuse dividend payments to the holding companies whenever such payments impair the capital structure of local companies, the whole intricate network of holding companies upon which the power trust rests will be endangered, for these companies have no other source of income.

AS THE DEPRESSION CONTINUES it becomes increasingly difficult to preserve domestic peace in Germany. More than seventy persons have been killed and several hundred injured in street fighting since June 16, on which date the Von Papen Government restored the National Socialist private army to good standing. On one day alone, Sunday, July 17, twenty deaths were reported. Carl Severing, the Socialist Minister of the Interior in Prussia, has issued strict orders to the police to withhold permits for meetings or parades unless sufficient police guards are available, and to state prosecutors to demand extreme penalties for persons found unlawfully bearing firearms. The Von Papen Cabinet and President Hindenburg have now acted to the extent of stopping all open-air meetings. It may be doubted that the Communists and Nazis will pay much attention to the commands of Minister Severing. The Nazis have become almost hysterical in demanding that the Socialists be driven out of Prussia, that the Communist Party be forthwith suppressed, by violent means if necessary, and that a state of siege or martial law be declared throughout Germany. These demands, daily repeated, have had an immeasurable effect upon the rank and file of the fascist party. From every section of the country come reports that gangs of young Nazis are terrorizing whole communities, destroying property, assaulting and even killing members of political parties other than their own. Former Chancellor Brüning, interviewed by Dorothy Thompson for the *Saturday Evening Post*, probably had this in mind when he said he could easily imagine a condition "where legitimate government becomes impossible, a condition in which people are delivered over to a sort of gang rule." Will that really be the fate of Germany?

A FINANCIAL DICTATORSHIP unprecedented in recent world history will be set up in Austria if the parliament in Vienna accepts the terms upon which the League of Nations is willing to lend Austria the sum of \$42,000,000. Under the loan agreement Dr. Rost Van Touningen, a Dutch financier, would go to Vienna with authority to examine into and pass upon the financial operations not only of the government, but of the leading business houses and banks as well. For example, not even private citizens or companies would be allowed to borrow more than \$140,000 abroad without his consent. Dispatches describing the agreement, which was drawn up at Lausanne, say that Dr. Van Touningen "would be the real ruler in Austria for the next few years. . . . He would have greater powers than were given to Dr. Alfred Zimmerman, appointed Commissioner-General of the League for Austria when the country obtained its first stabilization loan in 1922." Equally distressing for many Austrians are the political pledges attached to the agreement, which would make it virtually impossible for Austria to entertain any thought of political or economic fusion with Germany for the next twenty years, or until the loan was repaid. Harsh as it may appear, a financial dictatorship may prove the only means of preventing complete economic collapse in Austria.

WE RECORD WITH REGRET Professor Felix Frankfurter's decision not to accept the position on the Supreme Court of Massachusetts offered to him by Governor Ely. Unfortunately Governor Ely withheld his letter of declination for some two weeks, so that when it was finally announced it created in certain quarters the impression that the reactionary opposition to Professor Frankfurter's appointment had had something to do with his declination. That is, of course, not the case; if there is in the United States a dauntless fighter for what he believes to be just and right it is Felix Frankfurter. His reason is that in his judgment the most important thing in his profession today is the training of men for the Bar who shall have a proper concept of their professional duties as well as the best professional training. We agree that these things are of the utmost importance. But surely equally important is the immediate improvement of the Bench, and as we keenly feel, the appointment of Professor Frankfurter would have meant so much for the improvement of the Supreme Court that we are downcast by his refusal. We shall have to wait a long time before the men that he and his associates of the Harvard Law School are training for the Bar will reach the Bench. But everyone to his taste and, in this case, to his sense of public duty. We can well imagine that his colleagues of the Harvard Law School rejoice at his decision.

WE ARE NOT SURPRISED, if considerably aroused, by the action of the New York State Executive Council of the American Legion in suspending the Willard Straight Post of New York City. This post has been distinguished from its foundation by its liberalism, its anti-militarism, and its refusal to be actuated by a desire to get all possible money out of the government. On April 6 last it came out against the bonus in a telegram to the national commander, Henry L. Stevens, Jr., at Indianapolis, urging the discontinuance of "all attempts" by representatives of the Legion and by the "Washington lobby" of the organiza-

tion "to coerce Congress." It was for this offense, which in the eyes of most right-thinking Americans would seem a most praiseworthy and patriotic action that the Willard Straight Post has been excommunicated. Its final status has been referred to the New York State Convention which opens in Brooklyn on August 25. How the post will fare is pretty well indicated by the fact that the New York County group of posts numbering some 11,000 members has just unanimously voted to demand the immediate payment of the bonus. It is true that the action was not taken without some violent protests, but the vote was clear enough, and the matter now goes before the state convention. If that body approves we see no reason at all why the 11,000 New York City legionnaires should not join the Bonus Army in Washington in demanding this dole. The New York legionnaires were not even interested in denouncing the proven mismanagement and waste in the care of the veterans, which is already mulcting the country \$1,100,000,000 a year.

ONE GENUINE PUBLIC BENEFIT due to the depression is the suspension of Bernarr Macfadden's New York tabloid, the *Daily Graphic*—quite the most conscienceless, degraded, and reckless of all the papers in its class. If there was any offense of which a newspaper could be guilty which the *Graphic* did not commit, we should be glad to have it pointed out to us. Indeed, it is interesting to note that one of the reasons why it was not possible to find a purchaser was the existence of a considerable number of libel suits pending in the courts against this gutter journal. That the newspaper business is profoundly affected by the tremendous falling off in advertising everybody must be aware. Unfortunately this hits the just and the unjust alike, those journals that have a sense of public responsibility as well as those who have no other motive than selling their wares by appeal to the basest of passions. If current gossip in newspaper circles is correct, there will be a number of other failures if the crisis lasts eight or nine months longer. Let us hope, if this is true, that fate will be discriminating and pick out its victims with the excellent taste it has shown in the case of the *Graphic*.

WHATEVER MERE ACADEMICIANS may say, we are convinced that Miss Gertrude Stein is not actually loony. If she were, then she would have her lucid intervals and she could not put so many words together without having them occasionally say something according to the rules of grammar and the processes of logic. Consider for example her latest composition "Scenery and George Washington: A Novel or a Play." A crazy person might call six pages of prose "a novel." She might, on the other hand, call it "a play." But only a kind of genius in nonsense would think of giving us our choice, "a novel or a play." Or consider, if you still can, a specimen of the text. "All who will love to peal nuts and even not mean to leave any one or rather in the autumn seeing nuts lie will stoop and get them or else not may be said to be resembling to George Washington in respect to their birthday being in the month of February." That is a beautiful and that is being a beautiful is becoming a wow. But we would feel more comfortable if we knew one thing. Is "Scenery and George Washington" a patriotic tribute or is it another one of those nasty de-bunking essays? The D. A. R. will want to know.

The President "Warns" Europe

WITH the election clearly before him, the President has written to Senator Borah that while "our people are, of course, gratified at the settlement of the strictly European problem of reparations," he wishes to make it clear that the United States "has not been consulted regarding any of the agreements reported by the press," and is in no way "a party to nor in any way committed to any such agreements." So far, so good. But the President goes a good deal farther than that in these words:

While I do not assume it to be the purpose of any of these agreements to effect combined action of our debtors, if it shall be so interpreted, then I do not propose that the American people shall be pressed into any line of action or that our policies shall be in any way influenced by such a combination, either open or implied.

Now this thundering in the index may seem to some people statesmanship; to the benighted in Congress it may even pass as a vigorous assertion of American independence of our European debtors, and of our refusal to be taken into camp by any alliance against us. To our minds this denial by us to the European nations of the right to collective bargaining is both premature and childish. Usually statesmen wait for the accomplished fact before they state what their action will be in a given contingency, particularly as in this case conflicting reports from Europe have not made it clear just what is in the wind. Moreover, if the Allies were to agree among themselves to stand or fall together in their negotiations with the United States, they could put up a united front whether the actual negotiations were carried on individually or jointly. Why should there be all this furore about the possibility that two or more of our debtors may decide to come to us jointly to try to work out the debt problem? They have shown commendable zeal in meeting together at Lausanne and making the most extraordinary sacrifices in order to end the question of reparations.

Thereby, as Mr. Hoover declares in his letter to Senator Borah, they have conferred a boon upon the entire world which happens to include the United States. One would think that the government in Washington would similarly be glad to meet all our debtors face to face and have them state their joint interest and joint proposal in a situation which is admittedly a grave stumbling block to the restoration of economic sanity, and to work out at once a solution satisfactory to all concerned, instead of assuming that there is on foot a diabolical and hostile move to combine against us in order to obtain terms contrary to those which the politicians in Washington think we ought to have. Everybody is praising Europe for the other conferences that are coming—those on currency questions and on the general economic status of the world—and for the life of us we cannot see what right we have to say to our debtors that they shall not agree on a common course of action before entering into new debt negotiations with us. We are very much afraid that a dispatch from Washington, which reports the Administration to be highly satisfied that the President's letter "has removed this issue from the campaign," is the real explanation for Mr. Hoover's precipitate action.

Now we do not deny that the Allies have handled their case badly; that the so-called gentlemen's agreement, which appears to have found its way into print by accident, has been unfortunately worded and unfortunately described in advance, and that the conflicting British and French explanations of what it is all about have given an unfavorable impression. It is highly regrettable, indeed, that when so great a success was arrived at at Lausanne it should have been marred by this complication, especially because of the effect upon Germany. We had hoped that the psychological result in that sorely tried country would have been such as notably to raise the morale of the whole people, restore faith, confidence, and hope to them, and mark the beginning of their retracing the road to prosperity. Instead of which Germany is cast down by the impression that the whole settlement is not definite and final, but contingent upon the Allies obtaining satisfactory terms from the United States. That undoubtedly was the hope of the negotiators with Germany. But the German public ought to realize that whatever the real meaning of the gentlemen's agreement, and however mistaken the making of it was, reparations are dead. There will be no more. This blundering may cause a delay, possibly even a reconsideration. That will make no eventual difference. The greatest stumbling block to the psychological restoration of Europe has been removed once for all.

With Walter Lippmann we cannot understand why anybody should wish to have the rivalry between Paris and London continue, or why the restoration of Franco-British understanding, in place of hostility, suspicion, and intrigue, should be else than acclaimed. As for their offering joint terms in connection with the other Allies, we cannot see why the sum total of what they will offer will differ a whit whether they come forward individually or jointly. The United States, we repeat for the thousandth time, is not going to receive the debts owed. As we pointed out last week, the continuance of the depression of which these debts are a contributory cause, is costing us just one hundred times the \$270,000,000 which we are supposed to get annually from our debtors. Undoubtedly, giving up this sum of money will be hard in our present distress. But what has it not meant to England and to France to relinquish all hope of ever recovering anything more than \$750,000,000 from Germany? Any settlement that they may offer will be cheap at the price if it helps to revive our lost world trade.

To this it will come sooner or later, whatever the mistakes of the Allied statesmen and whatever the ranting in our Congress. No making faces at Europe, no hasty, ungrammatical Presidential letters, will alter the obvious fact that, as things stand today, the Allies cannot continue to pay, especially in the face of our outrageous tariffs. Washington can then do what it pleases. It may denounce our debtors as welchers, as dishonest. But this will not alter the fact that, whether through cooperation or through individual action, the Allies will, jointly or severally, take the same position, that they cannot go on with payments especially in view of the Lausanne settlement. So why all this alarm and outcry in Washington?

Labor Racketeers

WE heartily welcome the recent pronouncement of President William Green of the American Federation of Labor on behalf of the Executive Council of the Federation, when he pledged the organization to purge itself of racketeering and to maintain "our voluntary labor movement on an honest basis." The Federation, he declared, will have no mercy upon the racketeering leeches. It was surely time that the Federation gave evidence of its determination to stamp out an evil which threatens the very existence of its movement. Graft and racketeering are by no means confined to the labor movement, of course; they spring out of conditions in our national life for which the labor movement has no special responsibility. It is safe to assert that no union business agent ever amassed any great amount of wealth from his corrupt activities unless he was in league with a contractors' association, for example, or a corrupt political machine whose henchmen were making a much bigger pile than he. Usually when these cases have come into court, however, some union grafter like Brindell of New York in an earlier day is convicted, while the contractors or politicians go scot free. Nor should it be forgotten, in these days when evils that have fastened themselves on the labor movement are being exposed, that there are many unions in this country which, however conservative they may be, are honestly conducted. And some of the "unions" held up as examples of racketeering, never were unions in any proper sense at all, but were from the outset "rackets" deliberately built up by such persons as Al Capone to put legitimate unions out of business or to prevent their establishment.

Nevertheless, corruption and graft have been permitted to flourish in many organizations within the A. F. of L. as well as in some unions independent of the A. F. of L. A typical case is that of Theodore M. Brandle, Czar Brandle of the New Jersey Building Trades, as he is called, whose activities are exposed in a searching and comprehensive study by Louis Francis Budenz, executive secretary of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, published in a recent issue of *Labor Age*. Brandle figured in the public prints recently when he pleaded guilty to income tax frauds before Federal Judge Avis and with one or two associates was assessed penalties and fines amounting to \$96,221. Brandle holds many important union positions. He is business agent of the powerful Local 45, Jersey City, of the International Association of Bridge, Structural, and Ornamental Iron Workers; president of the Hudson County Building Trades Council; president of the Building Trades Council of New Jersey; and vice-president of this international union. In 1928 and 1929 he actually became director-general of the New Jersey Iron League, the organization of the employers dealing with his own iron workers' union. The League made him presents of \$10,000 in December of each of these years, "in the Christmas spirit" as he testified.

Recent months have witnessed revolts against such labor leadership in a surprising number of unions, including Brandle's own, the Sheet Metal Workers, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (notably in Local 3 in New York City), the Motion Picture Operators (the Kap-

lan case), and others. Collapse of racketeering in A. F. of L. unions may yet be one of the blessings in disguise which the Hoover depression will bring in its train. For undoubtedly the economic situation does have an important bearing on these developments. On the one hand, trade union members who were not disposed to be too critical of corrupt leadership when they were also "getting theirs" in the form of high wages and steady work, are not so tolerant when the business agent is no longer able "to produce the goods." Thus the more idealistic elements can now often count on the support, active or passive, of the general membership of the union. On the other hand, employers who in more prosperous days could pass on to the consumer the costs of racketeering on their own part and that of certain labor leaders, now find themselves unable to do this.

We hope, nevertheless, that the attack will be sustained and that a thorough job will be made of it. We note with satisfaction that several investigations have been initiated by the A. F. of L. President Green must not make the mistake so often made by reformers, of making scapegoats in dramatic fashion in a fit of righteous zeal of one or two individuals and then letting up while the system is still untouched. The present is furthermore a good time for the leadership of the A. F. of L. to ponder whether racketeering is not a logical, though unintended, outcome of their own labor philosophy. Their philosophy has been that of "pure and simple trade unionism." A labor political party, workers' cooperative enterprises, distinctly labor cultural institutions, they have felt are not needed, are, in fact, detrimental. The union exists to create a job monopoly, to get wages, hours, and conditions for a particular group of workers organized along craft lines and is mostly unconcerned about what happens to the fellow-workers in other crafts. It does not set itself any large and fundamental task of social reconstruction. Is not the descent from such narrow unionism to open and avowed racketeering altogether too easy?

An Appeal to Liberia

DURING the next few weeks the government of Liberia must decide whether or not to accept a reconstruction plan prepared by a League of Nations committee. Under this plan Liberia is asked to appoint eleven foreigners, recommended either by the League or by the United States, to administer native affairs, finance, and sanitation. Although these foreigners will be technically Liberian officials, the League of Nations is to be represented by a chief adviser. When the Liberian Government is unable to follow the advice of this official, the dispute is to be referred to the League Council. If no agreement can be reached the plan will lapse; otherwise it will be enforced for five years. The League committee has also proposed a moratorium on the Firestone loan of 1926 and a reduction in the extent of the great Firestone rubber concession of a million acres.

This plan for reconstruction is the outcome of the shocking revelations as to slavery and forced labor made by the Christy report in January, 1931. Subject to pressure from the United States and other governments following that report, Liberia asked the League for technical assistance

in carrying out the social, sanitary, and financial reorganization of the country. Now, at the end of a year-and-a-half's labor at Geneva, the Liberian Government hesitates to accept the League proposals. We can well understand the natural reluctance of the Barclay Government—much more nationalist than the King regime which was under the thumb of Washington—to entrust administrative responsibilities to foreigners. Nevertheless, *The Nation*, which has always been a warm friend of the Negro race and which believes firmly in independence for Liberia, would respectfully urge President Barclay to accept the League plan. If Liberia does not do so, the alternative, we are afraid, is intervention by the State Department. Last May the Department protested that the League plan did not go far enough—that what Liberia needed was a white dictator. In a note of May 18 the Department reserved complete freedom of action in case the League negotiations failed. We have no doubt that, if certain officials have their way, the State Department would welcome an opportunity to initiate an intervention in Liberia similar to that which it has carried out in Haiti. It would base such an intervention on the historic relation of the United States to Liberia, the humanitarian necessity of preventing the hinterland natives from being exploited, and the need for protecting the Firestone investments. Unlike the League plan which would genuinely develop Liberian independence, an American intervention, imposed by brute force and placed in the hands of incompetent officials, would destroy the existing government structure in Liberia so as to make future independence impossible.

No more damning indictment of American imperialism will be found than in the report of the Brunot committee of experts sent by the League to Liberia in the summer of 1931. This report declared that "the distressing thing" is that, as a result of the "deplorable" recommendations of the American financial adviser, the proceeds of the 1926 Firestone loan earmarked for public works were "squandered." Instead of putting this money into needed roads, our representatives advised the construction of a worthless power plant, an unnecessary wireless station, and certain presidential pavilions. In 1926, our optimistic State Department declared that the Firestone loan and rubber undertaking would bring "prosperity" to Liberia. Today, the charges imposed by the Firestone contract absorb more than 50 per cent of the revenues, the government is in default, salaries are unpaid, and the country is in chaos. For these conditions the Liberian governing class is partly responsible; but the policy of the United States is also to blame.

In view of past experiences, the Liberians should realize that a new intervention by the United States in their affairs will spell further disaster. *The Nation* will oppose to the utmost the unilateral intervention of the United States in the internal affairs of Liberia or any other country. There is, however, only one sure means by which Liberia can remove the danger of American intervention; that is by accepting in a spirit of good-will the League reconstruction program. A few years ago Austria and Hungary voluntarily accepted this type of assistance for a transitional period. We earnestly hope that Liberia will feel able to do so. Unless it accepts the League plan, there is grave danger that this republic, which should stand as a symbol to the Negro race everywhere, will disappear from the earth.

Food for a Penny

MR. Bernarr Macfadden is a man of varied interests. He is ex-proprietor of the late lamented *Graphic*, passionate advocate of physical culture, and publisher of a whole string of magazines which range from one devoted to exploiting the moral lessons deducible from the more picturesque forms of misconduct to another which advocates the physical benefits of raw vegetables. Yet Mr. Macfadden is sometimes treated by cynics with scant respect. Even *The Nation* was not inclined to consider his newspaper in the best traditions of American journalism, and *Ballyhoo* recently printed a mock advertisement picturing a robust torso which might possibly have been his and carrying below it the following legend which seemed to glance in many directions: "What a fool he is! Proud of his muscles, careless of his magazines! He has pink tabloids."

For the latest of his enterprises, a Penny Restaurant, we do not, however, see how anybody can have anything but admiration. Occupying two hastily remodeled floors in a building on Forty-third Street just east of Broadway in New York, it looks very much like any other cafeteria, but the prices are calculated to put new hope into those who may have a few cents or who may, at least, find it easier to get some such modest sum than to stand for hours in a bread line without receiving much for their pains. What is more, Mr. Macfadden maintains that with 7,000 patrons a day his "Foundation" can break even. And we see no reason why he should not attract an even larger clientele.

Outside is a Negro barker urging the curious to enter and when we visited the establishment during an off hour we found it well patronized. There is an upstairs room reserved for ladies into which we did not penetrate, but we noticed that the company in the main dining room was not composed exclusively of obvious down-and-outers. There was also, for instance, a letter carrier and several others who looked as though they were in a position to appreciate good values without being exactly destitute. Nor is the Penny sign a mere bait. Various kinds of soup, cod fish, hominy, beans, prunes, and bread are actually one cent each. Milk, apricots, and figs are two cents; meat-cakes, two for five. And for those who prefer to dine table d'hôte there is, for ten cents, a dinner consisting of soup, cod fish, meat balls, cabbage salad, bread and butter, prunes, and black coffee.

The price of only one item on the menu is likely to cause a different kind of surprise. Coffee, with milk and sugar, is three cents, but there is a reason for that. Mr. Macfadden does not approve of coffee. It is not a "vital food." Indeed, he is reported to have refused in the beginning to serve it at all and to have yielded only after a struggle to the suggestion that if people insisted upon having their poison he should provide it rather than tempt them to go elsewhere. We can only wish that someone in each of the other large cities would establish a similar institution. Detroit, the unhappy, is fortunate in also having a Penny Restaurant. The poor are used to having to accept anything from 100 per cent Americanism to a new religion as the price of a meal, and some of them would doubtless rather go without even coffee than have to be converted again.

The Bonus Army Scares Mr. Hoover

By MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

Washington, July 17

WHEN Congress adjourned last midnight without having yielded to the demands of the more than 18,000 bonus-seekers assembled here many rumors that the veterans would resort to direct action were spread through the city. Earlier in the day the veterans had for a brief moment been in an ugly mood, and this led to the belief that they would get out of control as soon as they realized that Congress had quit without helping them. But apparently only the White House took these rumors seriously. Members of the House and Senate showed not the slightest concern as they left the capitol. Almost all the veterans had peacefully retired to their camps long before midnight. Only a handful remained to act upon the suggestion that the veterans transfer their picketing activities to the White House.

Hardly more than fifty of the veterans started for the White House, but the moment their approach was reported President Hoover issued orders to the police to close the gates of the grounds and to clear Pennsylvania Avenue and adjacent streets of all pedestrian and vehicular traffic. More than four hundred policemen were summoned to surround the Executive Mansion, all available police reserves were called to stations nearby, and officers who had just been relieved from duty were commanded to return to their posts. The demonstrators were quickly dispersed, three of their leaders being arrested. According to Inspector O. T. Davis of the metropolitan force, President Hoover had said that if the police could not clear the streets within a few minutes he would call out regular army troops. It would have been a rare spectacle indeed to see troops patrolling Pennsylvania Avenue to protect the life of the President of the United States against a possible attack by a handful of weary, footsore, and bedraggled war veterans. Perhaps there was some danger of minor disorders in front of the White House, but in my judgment there was not the slightest possibility of any really serious trouble developing, for there is in these bonus-seekers no revolt, no fire, not even smoldering resentment; at most they are but an inchoate aggregation of frustrated men nursing a common grievance. However, the anxiety of the White House accurately reflected the increasing alarm with which high officials of the government have been viewing the presence of the bonus army—a feeling, it must be added, that a vast majority of the residents of Washington do not share.

For several days I have watched the veterans go about their business of petitioning Congress for an additional payment on their adjusted compensation certificates. A few days ago the Communist group marched peacefully, even meekly, down Pennsylvania Avenue toward the capitol. For several days the California contingent, including five to six hundred men, has been picketing the capitol building—their endless marching ceased only when Congress adjourned without having submitted to their silent demands. On Saturday a column of about a thousand veterans sought to break through a police line on the capitol plaza, but were quickly

pacified by the officers on hand and by the persuasive tongue of Brigadier-General Pelham D. Glassford, superintendent of police. However, the veterans somehow felt that their last opportunity to frighten Congress into approving the bonus was rapidly slipping from them, and they remained in an angry mood for a few minutes. But further oratory from Glassford and from the self-appointed leaders of the Bonus Expeditionary Forces quickly changed the attitude of the veterans and converted the atmosphere of protest into that of a college football rally. So superficial, one might say, is their apparent revolt. Out in their camps they show even less spirit. Squalid, miserable, and unhealthful as these camps certainly are, life there offers more security and comforts than many of these men have known for months.

Somehow many of the veterans have come to the conclusion that their chances of wheedling a few hundred dollars per man out of the government are virtually non-existent. Their enthusiasm for the bonus, though it is still whipped into life upon occasion by their leaders, has at bottom all but disappeared. These veterans appear to sense the inadequacy of their demands both actually and in principle. A few hundred dollars will not in any case go very far. Moreover, the veterans seem to know by instinct rather than by any process of ratiocination, that there is no promise of future economic security in the bonus. They feel that the goal they are seeking is a false one, but in their confusion of mind they can think of no other goal. Lastly, the veterans are all in or beyond middle age; every one of them has been thoroughly whipped by his individual economic circumstances. There is about the lot of them an atmosphere of hopelessness, of utter despair, though not of desperation. They have come to Washington for reasons beyond their understanding; they have no enthusiasms whatever, and no stomach for fighting. People who see in the bonus army the beginning of a fascist movement or the nucleus for a successful fascist "march on Washington" are in error. Such a movement may develop among the younger unemployed, but it will not, I am certain, start with the bonus army.

This is not to belittle the social significance of the bonus army, for its implications are vast and far-reaching. There is throughout the country a stirring among the unemployed such as we have not witnessed before, certainly not in the present period of depression. Individuals and families by the thousands have taken to migrating from community to community, not necessarily to seek greener pastures, better economic opportunities, but to escape from the misery and suffering at home. They are at last reaching the point where they can no longer endure the hardships of unemployment and haphazard charity. Only a few weeks ago I saw them by the scores walking singly or in groups along the highways of Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. Many were carrying the last of their worldly possessions in old suitcases or tied up in bundles. Those I stopped and talked with said they did not know where they were going, they wanted only to get away from home. It was inevitable, although essentially accidental, that the men among

them who feel that they have a claim against the government for their services should concentrate upon Washington. Thus the bonus march must be considered simply a minor manifestation of the unrest spreading through the country.

If conditions at home forced this mass movement of veterans upon Washington, other circumstances here are further developing the social transmutation. The veterans believe that only by appearing as loyal and sincere patriots can they persuade the government to pay them their bonuses. Hence they have endeavored in every way possible to demonstrate their firm faith in American institutions. They raucously proclaim, or their leaders for them, that they are unyielding supporters of law and order, that they are satisfied with the existing economic and political system; and they publicly demonstrate their devotion to the flag upon every conceivable occasion. But this blatant display of patriotism has got them, and is getting them, nowhere. Indeed, neither Congress nor the police seem at all impressed by their flag-waving. In the short-lived demonstrations before the White House a veteran carrying the Stars and Stripes was knocked to the sidewalk by one policeman while three others wrested the flag from his determined grasp, and the veteran, for all his loyalty, was carted away to a cell. If patriotism will not help them, what will?

In only a few places in the United States can be found human habitations as mean and uninviting as the bonus camps. The exceptions are the "Hoovervilles" which have sprung up on the river fronts of some of our cities, communities of homeless families which have erected shelters out of packing boxes and old tin cans. Here in the bonus camps every conceivable kind of building material has been pressed into service—discarded bricks, oil tins, lumber salvaged from buildings that are being wrecked to make room for new and palatial government offices, strips of canvas and even of clothing. A few of the veterans have tents or sections of tents in which to live; others sleep under wall-less, wooden shelters, or under the open skies, on the lawns of the Congressional Library or the capitol. One group has occupied several abandoned buildings near the Naval Hospital and not far from the White House; other contingents have taken over half-wrecked buildings on lower Pennsylvania Avenue near the capitol. Since they have no permanent water supply, cleanliness is hardly to be thought of, and in general the sanitary conditions are unspeakable. Nevertheless, each unit of the bonus army has attempted to enforce some sort of order and discipline; most of the camps and living quarters are fairly well "policed"; at Camp Marks regular military latrines have been dug. Thus otherwise impossible living conditions have been made more bearable.

The lack of food presents the most difficult problem. The larger group at Anacostia, comprising probably 15,000 men, has been fed with some regularity, though the leaders of the camp usually do not know from one meal to the next where the necessary food is to be obtained. Organized pan-handling on an extensive scale has helped a great deal in this respect. Several wealthy women residing in Washington have been prevailed upon to donate funds for the purchase of food. Some small merchants have voluntarily contributed provisions. Other donations both of food and of money have been received from other cities. The fare is none too appetizing and not always sufficient, but these men until now at least have been getting something to eat. But there has

been real hunger among some of the smaller groups, particularly among the Californians, who have been sleeping on the capitol lawns, and the Communists, who are quartered on New York Avenue near the White House. These latter groups have literally been living from hand to mouth. Last Friday noon, for example, Roy Robertson, leader of the California unit, had only \$5 on which to feed his five to six hundred followers.

Female camp-followers, though still few in number, have been active. Twenty-five to thirty of them may be seen entering the camps after dusk every night. How many more may slip in unobserved it is not possible to say. These women must give themselves without charge, for very few of the veterans have any ready cash. The women are of the lowest sort, and there can be little question that thus far only the lack of proper medical inspection has concealed the spread of venereal disease. There is only one medical station in any of the bonus settlements, that at Camp Marks, and even there no provision has been made for prophylactic treatment. But these things must not be mentioned publicly in Washington.

Who are the bonus-seekers and where have they come from? They are mostly farm workers, fruit pickers, itinerant factory workers, and other unskilled or semi-skilled laborers, and they come from every section of the country. I do not believe that a single State or a single industry is unrepresented here. However, a large minority of the men are skilled mechanics, white-collar workers, and even professional people. I have met an office manager, a factory foreman, two real estate dealers, a dentist, and three newspapermen in the bonus army. These men I encountered only by chance. I was shown the rosters of some of the camps and there were the names of many other representatives of the middle class, an editor, a grocer, a trucking contractor, a traffic engineer, several lawyers. It is these people who have taken charge of the Washington show and who have given the bonus army what discipline it has. Thus the movement is essentially bourgeois and not proletarian, at least in outward form. This explains in large measure the patriotism and flag-waving of the bonus-seekers. These middle-class representatives have become the leaders of the movement, and in that capacity, although they have been most outspoken in their profession of loyalty to American institutions, they have had their past records painstakingly investigated by the Department of Justice and other government agencies. Such seems to be the inevitable fate of all rebels in this country, however mild or law-abiding they may be. Nevertheless, these leaders have had a profound effect upon the rank and file of the army. Uninspiring as the man is, Walter W. Walters, commander-in-chief of the B. E. F., has a large and devoted following among the Anacostia men. During the demonstration on the capitol plaza Saturday, although he talked the most hollow nonsense, the veterans greeted him with tremendous applause, cheered his every word as though he alone had the power to bring them the bonus. Roy Robertson in another way demonstrated the influence he has over his several hundred followers. He was able from the time that he arrived a week ago until Congress adjourned on Saturday to keep his men constantly marching around the capitol plaza. They could at any time have deserted his "death watch," for he had no way of disciplining them, but they elected to remain faithful to this man with a broken

neck and persuasive personality. Yet Robertson frankly admitted to me that he had no plan, no program, no philosophy whatever; he was simply bent upon keeping his picket-line going until Congress had quit.

These middle-class leaders have been seeking to mold opinion also through publication of a well-edited and ably written weekly newspaper calling itself the *B. E. F. News*. The bonus question, of course, receives the most attention, and from the standpoint of propaganda the question is very cleverly discussed. Along with this discussion, there is editorial criticism of Mr. Hoover, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and Wall Street; all are blamed, in the order named, for the failure of the bonus drive. Moderate in tone at the start, the *News* has lately become more violent in its language. For example, in the most recent issue was published an editorial entitled *Are You Curs and Cowards?* This article, indeed, comes very close to calling for direct action. "Where," it asks, "is this American manhood we boast about? A dog in the gutter will fight to feed its pups. Yet millions of Americans are standing idly on street corners, or slinking up back alleys, afraid to demand what God intended them to have. . . . For three years you have been worse than the serfs and slaves of old. For three years you have cringed and fawned and begged for crumbs. And all the time you had the power within yourselves, if you only had the intelligence and courage. . . . Why stand you thus, when all is within your power? Are you truly curs and cowards? Or are you men?"

The *News* sells for five cents a copy, and there are very few veterans here who can spare that much money. But the residents of Washington, particularly the government employees, must be reading the paper and its *Curs and Cowards* editorials. More than 75,000 copies of a recent number were sold on the street corners of the city.

There is no doubt that Washington officialdom from Mr. Hoover down is badly frightened by the presence of these former soldiers. The President revealed his feelings last midnight. Vice-President Curtis earlier in the week called for a company of sixty marines to guard the Senate. They were dispatched to the capitol only to be ordered back to their barracks as soon as General Glassford, the chief of police, learned of their arrival. A few weeks ago the District of Columbia commissioners sought to maneuver Glassford into the position of having to oust the veterans from the city and to assume responsibility for that action, but the orders were withdrawn when Glassford demanded that the orders be given him in writing. More recently the Capitol Police Board publicly charged that the pickets on the capitol plaza were violating the law and suggested that it was Glassford's duty to prevent such law-breaking. The officials have tried in many ways to rid the city of these "Bums of 1932," as they call themselves. They have pleaded with them, argued with them, and threatened them; jobs have been promised to a few of the leaders and "free" transportation has been offered to the entire army by act of Congress, the fare to be repaid by the veterans out of future bonus payments. But all to no avail. General Glassford quickly gave up his initial attempts to persuade the men to leave, and has since been giving virtually all his time to the men and their needs. Though not a wealthy man, he has donated several hundred dollars toward feeding the army.

But while most of the higher officials are obviously

frightened, the government employees, who make up the bulk of Washington's population, are frankly in sympathy with the veterans. The reason for this is not readily apparent. It may be that the relatively lower standard of living obtaining among the government clerks has given them some understanding of the anxiety attending unemployment and loss of income. It may be that the residents of Washington, hearing every day as they do of new monster "relief" projects running into the billions of dollars for the benefit of the banks and the railroads, feel that an injustice is being done the veterans. Or it may be that their attitude is simply a natural expression of sympathy for people of their own kind and class. This sympathy reveals itself in many ways, in the comments one hears in government offices and among spectators at the various parades and demonstrations of the veterans, in letters to the daily press and to the *B. E. F. News*, in the numerous small donations of food and money received at the bonus camps from Washington residents. The other day about 150 of the veterans marched down Pennsylvania Avenue. A few of the marchers were shouting: "Congress must not adjourn!" A clerk in a clothing store stepped out to view the parade. He heard the shouts and in a sneering voice called out: "Oh, the damn fools; they think they can stop Congress from quitting." He retired very hurriedly under the barrage of biting comments from the crowd along the curb. The ordinary people of Washington may not be able to help the veterans, but they are ready to defend their cause.

Despite rumors floating about town that the Hoover Administration intends to oust the bonus-seekers, by force if need be, now that Congress has adjourned, I very much doubt that this will be attempted. A major part of the Republican Presidential campaign was to be based on the myth that under Mr. Hoover's able guidance the country has been free from violent disturbances and that the constituted authorities have not needed to call out troops to keep the unemployed loyal and obedient. This line of attack has been seriously compromised by Vice-President Curtis's error in calling out the marines and by Mr. Hoover's panic-stricken demand for police protection. If bayonets were now to be used against jobless men, even ex-service men bearing petitions, the political result would certainly be disastrous for Mr. Hoover. Nevertheless, the rumors persist, and upon high authority in the War Department it is said that the army, "though not looking for trouble, is ready for this or any other emergency."

It may be that the bonus forces will disintegrate of their own accord. The Washington summer months are long and hot; the Anacostia flats are notorious for their mosquitos, and the high cost of feeding such a large group of men may ultimately make it impossible for the residents of the city to continue to carry that burden. On the other hand, a majority of the men have no homes to which to return, and if they had there would be no assurance that they would be better off there than here. In all likelihood a large number of them will remain on through the summer, starving if necessary, yet clinging hopefully to the belief that in Washington, capital of the nation and source of munificent relief for the banks and railroads, they will find the help they need. But whatever happens this summer, there is every reason to believe that the veterans and other unemployed will be here in greatly increased numbers before Congress reconvenes in December.

The Ottawa Conference and World Trade

By ROBERT A. MacKAY

Ottawa, July 19

THE hopes of the British Empire are centered this month on Ottawa. The Imperial Conference summoned to meet here on July 21 is the goal toward which empire "free traders" have looked for generations. It is no less the means whereby empire governments hope to revive the flow of trade and business men to enlarge their markets, and farmers and other producers of primary products hope to raise disastrous price levels. Nor is Ottawa without interest to the non-British world. If trade is revived within the empire, or if it is diverted from present channels by removing internal tariff barriers or erecting new barriers against the outside world, the consequences of Ottawa may be far-reaching.

Hitherto trade within the empire has been shackled by the conflicting tariff policies of Great Britain and the dominions, the dominions being as devoted to protection as Great Britain formerly to free trade. While slight breaches in favor of British products have been made in dominion tariff walls by means of preferential tariffs the net increase in empire trade has not been very great. Until this year Great Britain has been unable to aid dominion trade by tariffs, except in a few minor cases under the "safeguarding" policies initiated after the war to protect certain new industries such as the motor trades. On the two earlier occasions when the Conservative Party attempted to introduce tariffs and preferences for empire products, that is in 1905 and 1923, the electorate drove the party from office. The issue was revived dramatically by Mr. Bennett, Canadian Prime Minister, at the Imperial Conference of 1930 when he bluntly demanded preference for preference from the British Government. Though his offer was unacceptable to a Labor Government elected on a free-trade platform it stirred English politics to their foundations. The financial crisis of last summer which drove Labor from office and brought into power a government predominantly protectionist has induced Great Britain to pick up the gage thrown down by Mr. Bennett. The new government as everyone knows has committed Great Britain to protection. The new tariff act exempts empire products until next November, that is until after the Ottawa Conference. For the first time, therefore, a British Government comes to the conference table ready to do business with the dominions on the basis of preferential tariffs. Whether a bargain can be struck is the question which the various governments are asking themselves as they gather at Ottawa.

Even enthusiasts in the cause of empire trade are compelled to admit that there are unpleasant obstacles still in the way. First and foremost is the tremendous stake which the empire as a whole has in trade with the outside world. This is especially true of Great Britain which in the years 1929 to 1931 sold on the average more than 55 per cent of her exports outside the empire. Its special interests in

two areas are worth noting. With the Argentine it does more than 5 per cent of its total external trade. British investments there are reputed to run from five to six-hundred million pounds, which is at least 10 per cent more than those investments in Canada. Over half the ships that enter Argentine ports are British ships, and British capital controls Argentine railway and water transportation. Combined with these material foundations for an expanding market Britain possesses the good-will of the Argentine people as perhaps no other nation does. With the exception of the Irish Free State no self-governing dominion is as vital to British foreign trade as is the Argentine but scarcely less important is the Scandinavian bloc. With the three countries, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, Great Britain does more than 7½ per cent of her total external trade. Though its investments in these countries are not great, their proximity as a source of supply, their comparative prosperity, and their growing importance as a market for manufactures make them a vital factor in the recovery of British foreign trade. Nor can it be overlooked that the products of both the Argentine and the Scandinavian group compete in British markets with dominion products, particularly wheat and meats from the Argentine, and wood products and butter, eggs, and bacon, from Scandinavia.

Canada, no less than Great Britain, is dependent on foreign markets and sources of supply. In 1931, for example, more than 63 per cent of Canadian exports went outside the empire, and despite the American tariff wall, more than 42 per cent to the United States. Moreover about half of Canada's trade outside the empire is with the United States. No other empire country, indeed, is so economically dependent on a single foreign country as is Canada, though all the dominions are vitally concerned with holding and extending existing foreign markets.

Under these conditions any attempt to confine empire trade to empire channels is out of the question. It is equally clear that any policy which would impair foreign markets though it held out the promise of an alternative market within the empire would be highly dangerous. It would be merely swapping horses in midstream during the present depression. Since the economic interests of the various units of the empire differ greatly it is scarcely possible to fit all to a single fiscal pattern. As things stand today an imperial Zollverein is quite impossible and it is little likely to receive any consideration at Ottawa. At the most, all that can be hoped for at Ottawa is a series of agreements to fit the different needs of the different member states of the empire. In view of the vital interests of certain members, especially Great Britain, in foreign trade, it is scarcely likely that such agreements will be completely exclusive. Great Britain at any rate has intimated that it hopes to make Ottawa merely the starting-point for a wider series of tariff agreements, and if so it is scarcely likely to enter into any agreements which

would completely exclude foreign nations as long as bargains are possible.

A second stumbling-block to success at Ottawa is the clash between the market interests of Great Britain and the economic policies of the dominions. Apart from coal, the products for which Great Britain seeks a market are manufactured articles. On the other hand, the dominions, and especially Canada and Australia, are committed to building up their secondary industries by means of tariffs. In the past they have been reluctant to open their markets by means of preferences to goods which would compete with home manufactures. "Canada first," "Australia first," "South Africa first," and now "Ireland first," indicate the dominant note in tariff-making and there is little evidence that any of the dominions has suffered a change of heart. Preferential tariffs under these circumstances are often of little value to manufacturers. To Mr. Bennett's offer at London in 1930 to raise tariffs 10 per cent higher against the outside world, Mr. Thomas aptly replied "Humbug!" So high were Canadian tariffs that the 10 per cent difference in the case of non-empire goods made little difference to the British manufacturer. The difficulty has been further illustrated within the past few weeks by the complete failure of a conference between British and Canadian cotton manufacturers called to agree upon a policy to be laid before the Imperial Conference. The British representatives reported back to the British Government that the demands of the Canadian manufacturers made the entrance of British goods into Canada virtually impossible, to which the Canadian delegates retorted that the British manufacturers were trying to dictate Canadian tariff policies and that any lowering of the Canadian tariff would ruin the Canadian industry. And there are many manufacturers on both sides of the Atlantic who think likewise.

As for the dominions, though they are becoming increasingly industrialized, their chief aim at Ottawa is to obtain sheltered markets in Great Britain for their primary products. Of these wheat and wool bulk largest, and wheat especially is likely to come in for a great deal of attention at Ottawa. Yet the promise of better prices in a sheltered British market for these products is largely an illusion. In both cases, the quantity produced in the dominions is much greater than the needs of the empire and the surplus would have to go at world prices. Moreover, unless the dominion producers were able to hold back their offerings on British markets, the very pressure of quantity would drive prices down to the level of world prices. Other methods are being investigated, notably bulk purchases by the British Government and compulsory quotas of empire products for British millers and woolen manufacturers, but the advantages of either seem highly questionable.

There remains a large number of products of which the empire produces less than its needs, as for example: soft woods; such agricultural products as bacon, butter, eggs, fruits, cotton, tea, coffee, and cocoa; and such non-ferrous metals as copper. It is in such products that preferences are likely to be forthcoming, if at all, from Great Britain. Yet Great Britain must ever keep in mind its foreign trade. It must beware of antagonizing foreign customers or making it difficult for them to sell its goods, or of erecting tariff barriers which would drive up manufacturers' costs. Preferences even in these commodities are likely to be extended

only with caution and the net effect on dominion trade may not be very great.

Next to tariffs, currency questions promise to occupy the attention of Ottawa. There has been much talk of creating an empire currency bloc with a view to encouraging trade. Indeed the Canadian Government is committed to initiating discussions on the matter. Proposals are numerous. Silver has its votaries even in political circles on both sides of the Atlantic, but it is doubtful if it has many supporters or will gain a serious hearing. Other schemes propose a single bank of issue for the empire or a central bank to serve as a clearing house or even to control credit throughout the empire as the Federal Reserve Bank is supposed to do for the United States. The obvious location for such a bank would be London. Yet such schemes overlook the patent fact that certain of the dominions at least are in no mood to surrender financial autonomy any more than they are political autonomy.

Other schemes propose that the dominions should tie their respective currencies to the pound sterling. But the problem is by no means simple. Not the least difficulty is the present wide variation in the value of empire currencies. The Canadian dollar is above sterling in relation to the American dollar and of course in relation to gold; the Australian pound is far below. South Africa is still on gold. Only the Free State's currency has followed closely the ups and downs of the pound sterling. Moreover, none of the empire governments which are now off gold have quite made up their minds what to do about it, whether to remain off indefinitely, or whether to stabilize on the gold standard and if so at what rate. Canada, moreover, is particularly interested in the case of any change because of its heavy borrowings at New York and its extensive commercial relations with the United States. Canada might desert the dollar at its peril.

The prospects of success at Ottawa are not great, but it would be a mistake to think they are negligible. Great Britain, it must be remembered, has taken the plunge for protection and is undoubtedly prepared to grant preferences to the dominions, in a considerable variety of minor products at least, for a definite *quid pro quo*. Moreover, political reputations are at stake, particularly that of Mr. Bennett, who may be regarded as the father of the conference. Mr. Bennett has been known to take the bit in his teeth, and he may do it again with respect to tariffs, despite Canadian manufacturers. There is also the possibility of extensions in the existing preferential agreements between the dominions. But whether it succeeds or fails the conference can scarcely be ignored by the outside world, let alone the empire. The United States in particular is likely to be affected. Substantial preferences in favor of British and Canadian automobile industries are not improbable. Canada might perhaps agree to erect a stiff tariff on coal, particularly anthracite, in favor of British coal. British tariffs on minor foodstuffs such as fruits and cured meats with preferences for the dominions are not impossible. Such steps would certainly affect American exports. Yet Ottawa must not be looked upon merely as a menace to the trade of other countries. If by reducing barriers within the empire the trade of British nations can be increased and not merely diverted, and their prosperity thereby promoted, the effect upon world trade and world prosperity should be beneficial. The welfare of

a quarter of the globe is of advantage to the other three quarters. If the conference adopts the short-sighted policy of restricting trade for temporary advantages by erecting worse tariff barriers than the consequences will be harmful

and Ottawa may prove to be another nail in the coffin of world trade. But it may equally as well mark an advance toward recovery, not only for the British empire, but for the world as a whole.

Wilson Was for War in March, 1916

By C. HARTLEY GRATTAN

AMERICANS who raise their hands in self-righteous horror when some new atrocity in pre-war European diplomacy is revealed usually have small knowledge of the history of American diplomacy during the same period. They do not realize that the State Department is the most autocratic Foreign Office in the world and, potentially at least, one of the most irresponsible. Furthermore, the President of the United States has large powers in the direction of foreign affairs, extending to the use of confidential agents responsible to no one within the government but himself. He can conduct negotiations about which even the State Department may be ignorant.

The most famous confidential agent of a President in American history was Colonel E. M. House, adviser to President Woodrow Wilson. These two men had a pretty firm control of American foreign policy during the crucial period, 1914-17, when we were seeking to maintain our neutrality in the World War. They were responsible for the lapses from impartiality characteristic of the diplomacy of that difficult period. They had the power to keep us out of war or put us into it. Since it still is generally admitted that the American people did not want to participate in the World War, their every act should be scrutinized in the light of that fact. Their remissness in handling their heavy responsibility is notorious. One of the most striking examples of flagrant disregard for frequently expressed American opinion occurred during the early spring of 1916, long before Wilson sought and won reelection on the ground that he had kept the American people out of war.

In late December of 1915 Colonel House started on one of his periodical trips to Europe at President Wilson's behest. His ostensible object was to sound the Powers on the prospects of peace. Never very friendly toward Germany, House at this time was so thoroughly prejudiced that he entertained the idea of not visiting Germany at all. Ambassador Gerard had communicated messages that seemed to indicate that Germany was in no mood to talk peace. Ambassador Page at London felt that there should be no temporizing; that we should at least acquiesce in the Allied desire for the complete military defeat of Germany. Eventually House did visit Germany, though his prejudices prevented him from assessing the situation objectively, and whatever he might have accomplished, given greater patience and insight, was made impossible in advance by his attitude. He was entertained in London by Ambassador Page, who gave a dinner with Lloyd George, Reginald McKenna, Austen Chamberlain, and Lord Reading present. In Colonel House's diary we read:

Page started the conversation by saying that Mr. Chamberlain and others had asked him "what the United States wished Great Britain to do," and he requested me

[Colonel House] to give an answer. I replied, "*The United States would like Great Britain to do those things which would enable the United States to help Great Britain to win the war.*" ["Intimate Papers of Colonel House," Vol. II, p. 124. My italics.]

This was in January, 1916, before he visited Germany. When shortly thereafter House made his trip to Germany he naturally enough found little to his taste. When he told Jules Cambon how he had parried the German remarks, he recorded in his diary that Cambon "was pleased with the answers I had made, and seemed to accept them as interpreting the position of the Allies" ("Intimate Papers," Vol. II, p. 158). He told Cambon that "the lower the fortunes of the Allies ebbed, the closer the United States would stand by them" ("Intimate Papers," Vol. II, p. 163). House was supposedly representing a *neutral* Power, the United States.

The visit to Germany was a mere gesture, empty of meaning. It was vastly more important to House that he be well received in England and France, for it was necessary to set the stage for his real mission. Before he sailed, President Wilson had agreed with him that it was the duty of the United States to prevent a German victory. The great question was how this was to be done. House had given the matter a great deal of thought and he had corresponded a bit with Sir Edward Grey on the matter. He had eventually evolved a formula to cover the case and it had been indorsed in its tentative form by President Wilson. It was this formula that he now was in a position to urge upon the Allied governments. He chose to present it to Sir Edward Grey.

The essence of the formula was that it guaranteed to the Allies the assistance of the United States in defeating Germany. It fell into two parts: (1) it envisaged the possibility of joining the Allies in forcing terms on Germany in a peace conference; and (2) it envisaged the possibility of the United States entering the war on the side of the Allies to bring Germany to terms by force of arms. House phrased the matter roughly in a letter to Grey, dated October 17, 1915:

In my opinion, it would be a world-wide calamity if the war should continue to a point where the Allies could not, with the aid of the United States, bring about a peace along the lines you and I have so often discussed. What I want you to know is that, whenever you consider the time is propitious for this intervention, I will propose it to the President. He may then desire me to go to Europe in order that a more intimate understanding as to procedure may be had.

It is in my mind that, after conferring with your government, I should proceed to Berlin and tell them that it was the President's purpose to intervene and stop this destructive war, provided the weight of the United States,

thrown on the side that accepted our proposal, could do it.

I would not let Berlin know, of course, of any understanding had with the Allies, but would rather lead them to think our proposal would be rejected by the Allies. This might induce Berlin to accept the proposal, but if they did not do so, it would nevertheless be the purpose to intervene. If the Central Powers were still obdurate, it would *probably* be necessary for us to join the Allies and force the issue. ["Intimate Papers," Vol. II, pp. 90-91.]

The formula was evolved without knowledge of, or even consideration of, the Allied secret treaties. Colonel House had moved through Europe without catching more than a vague intimation of the existence of those treaties. He apparently did not want to know about the matters they comprehended. On December 22, 1915, he wrote to President Wilson: "The Allies will take care of the territorial and indemnity questions, and we need not go into that at this time. If we start with such discussions, it would involve us in controversies that might be endless and footless" ("Intimate Papers," Vol. II, p. 107). All this is true, but it strikes us now as rather high irony! And that House and Wilson were ready to proceed to the most extreme commitments ignoring such crucial matters bespeaks appalling naivete. House and Wilson, knowing nothing about the true aspirations of the Allies, were prepared to throw the whole strength of the United States behind them to defeat Germany and insure an Allied victory. And they were prepared to carry matters to this pitch when the sentiment of the country they were supposed to be representing was against war! President Wilson was prepared to concur in the following agreement, modifying it only by the italicized words in the following transcript. This copy was made by Sir Edward Grey for the records of the British Foreign Office and printed in his memoirs, "Twenty-Five Years," Volume II, pages 127-28. It is also printed in House's "Intimate Papers," Volume II, pages 201-2. On the British side it was made with the knowledge and consent of Asquith, Prime Minister; Grey, Foreign Minister; Balfour, First Lord of the Admiralty; and Lloyd George, Minister of Munitions. On the American side we find House, Wilson, and, apparently, after it was all over, Lansing. Lloyd George for one did not know that Wilson could not make war without the consent of Congress. Colonel House (letter to G. S. Viereck, February 13, 1932) says the point was clear to Grey. But how about Balfour and Asquith? And what stand would they have taken if the matter had come to an open issue and Wilson had failed to deliver "the goods"? The agreement reads as follows (the italicized words were inserted by President Wilson):

MEMORANDUM

(Confidential)

Colonel House told me that President Wilson was ready, on hearing from France and England that the moment was opportune, to propose that a conference should be summoned to put an end to the war. Should the Allies accept this proposal, and should Germany refuse it, the United States would *probably* enter the war against Germany.

Colonel House expressed the opinion that if such a conference met, it would secure peace on terms not unfavorable to the Allies; and if it failed to secure peace, the United States would *probably* leave the conference as a belligerent on the side of the Allies, if Germany was un-

reasonable. Colonel House expressed an opinion decidedly favorable to the restoration of Belgium, the transfer of Alsace and Lorraine to France, and the acquisition by Russia of an outlet to the sea, though he thought that the loss of territory incurred by Germany in one place would have to be compensated to her by concessions to her in other places outside Europe. If the Allies delayed accepting the offer of President Wilson, and if, later on, the course of the war was unfavorable to them that the intervention of the United States would not be effective, the United States would probably disinterest themselves in Europe and look to their own protection in their own way.

I said that I felt the statement, coming from the President of the United States, to be a matter of such importance that I must inform the Prime Minister and my colleagues; but that I could say nothing until it had received their consideration. The British Government could, under no circumstances, accept or make any proposal except in consultation and agreement with the Allies. I thought that the Cabinet would probably feel that the present situation would not justify them in approaching their Allies on this subject at the present moment; but as Colonel House had had an intimate conversation with M. Briand and M. Jules Cambon in Paris, I should think it right to tell M. Briand privately, through the French Ambassador in London, what Colonel House had said to us; and I should, of course, whenever there was an opportunity, be ready to talk the matter over with M. Briand, if he desired it.

(Initialed) E. G.

Foreign Office, February 22, 1916

This is one of the most extraordinary documents to be found in the annals of American diplomacy. Its negotiation is an example of secret diplomacy of the purest water. It was negotiated by a man who had no official standing in the government, who was merely the President's secret agent. The document was ratified on March 7, 1916, by a President who, only a very few months later, went before the American public and won an election on the ground that he had kept the country out of war! The word he inserted, "probably," was the only loophole he allowed himself in case he should fail to persuade Congress to follow the course he had marked out. And even that word was not entirely designed to protect him from the wrath of the American people should they ever realize how irresponsibly they had been committed to the Allied cause; it was partly designed to protect him from the wrath of the Allies should he be unable to deliver American men, money, and materials to the Allies *at their demand*.

How are we to describe this astonishing document? George Sylvester Viereck, writing in *Liberty* for March 19, 1932, calls it a "secret treaty, made without the knowledge and consent of the United States Senate. . . . I beg the reader's pardon. It was not a 'treaty' but a 'gentleman's agreement.'" He then, very correctly, compares it to the agreements between England and France in force at the beginning of the war. Under these documents Sir Edward Grey was able to deny that England had any treaty obligations to France. They implied only a moral obligation. Yet whatever one may take to be the proper method of stating the obligation, it was sufficiently strong to carry England into the war, as all critical students of the problem now admit. To make it easier for true-born Britons to meet an obligation which they were assured many times did not exist, the Belgian issue was raised and played up. It is

highly likely that if the House-Grey agreement had been evoked, its forthright and unmistakable meaning would not have been presented to the people as a reason for their participation in the war. Some more emotionally and morally exciting reason would have been discovered, particularly since the American public had to be heavily propagandized to accept war at all.

But the Allies never found occasion to use the scheme. It is interesting to speculate why. In the first place, there are the obstacles cited by Grey in the memorandum itself. Apparently it never became worth while for the British to try to overcome them. Secondly, it is obvious that with this revealing glimpse of the true state of mind of the American leaders, it was better to gamble on their entering the war anyhow than to invite them in and consequently incur a definitely implied obligation. The Allies were willing to gamble on Germany provoking America to war. They won on this bet, as we all know. In the intervening months they were able to play a game that was rather one-sided; they knew that the Americans were prejudiced in their favor and that they could go a long way without provoking them to war. In spite of this they very nearly overplayed their hand in the fall of 1916. It would be interesting to know how often their obviously offensive courses, such as the black list, were justified in their inner counsels by appeal to the evidence of the agreement between Colonel House and Sir Edward Grey.

If on their side the Allies made no use of the agreement other than as a psychological revelation, it was not because of any reluctance of Wilson and House to carry out their part in it. In writing of the negotiations House noted in his diary:

The . . . point that came up was how the British Government could let us know they considered the time propitious for us to intervene, without first submitting the question to the Allies, and if they did not submit it to the Allies, how to avoid the charge of double dealing.

The solution I suggested for this was that at regular intervals I would cable Sir Edward Grey, in our private code, offering intervention. He could ignore the messages until the time was propitious, and then he could bring it to the attention of the Allies as coming from us and not as coming from Great Britain. ["Intimate Papers," Vol. II, p. 175.]

This procedure was followed. House cabled Grey on three occasions. On March 10, 1916, immediately after the Gore-McLemore resolutions advising that Americans be warned off armed merchantmen were defeated at Wilson's desire, the first cable was dispatched ("Intimate Papers," Vol. II, pp. 220-21). This was not acted upon by Grey because of the attitude of the French, who were hostile to peace suggestions. On April 6, 1916, a second message was sent, drafted by President Wilson himself. This was at the height of the Sussex crisis when relations with Germany were very strained anyhow. Wilson's message read: "Since it seems probable that this country must break with Germany on the submarines question unless the unexpected happens, and since, if this country should once become a belligerent, the war would undoubtedly be prolonged, I beg to suggest that if you had any thought of acting at an early date on the plan we agreed upon, you might wish now to consult with your allies with a view to acting immediately"

("Intimate Papers," Vol. II, p. 231). Of course Grey took no action. In 1925, on thinking it over, House saw how foolish it had been to expect action at this time. The last effort was made on May 10, 1916. This was after the American victory in the Sussex difficulties. It now seemed proper to tax the British with violations of international law, or to make an attempt to bring about peace. This effort also came to nothing and the agreement was considered dead by House and Wilson ("Intimate Papers," Vol. II, pp. 278-79).

President Wilson was deeply annoyed by the seemingly cavalier attitude of the Allies and felt that the time had come to make some move outside the agreement. His feeling against the Allies became more and more hostile and reached its highest pitch in the fall of 1916 around election time. If the Germans had not deeply affronted Wilson in the early months of 1917 by insisting on immediately resuming submarine warfare, there is every likelihood that he would have forced the Allies to pull in their horns and even to make peace. The election of November had made it clear that the American people would support him in any peace-making venture, even if not in war. He was unable to retain his strategic hold on the situation long enough to carry out this program, but he did carry the country into war!

The actual outcome, motivated in so complicated a manner, is of secondary importance here. The fact remains that it was not the fault of either House or Wilson that the American people were not carried into the war on the basis of a secret document negotiated by Wilson's personal agent, modified in a trifling fashion by the President, and then agreed to by him, which had no legal standing whatever. President Wilson was willing to put the American people into a war in which they had no interests at stake by means of that secret diplomacy which he was later so fulsomely to denounce. He was willing to dispose of the people he was leading with all the disregard of their true interests characteristic of any Czar or Imperial Majesty in history.

Such a power has always been within the reach of the American President. President Roosevelt utilized it to make us virtually a party to the Anglo-Japanese alliance. There is no reason on earth why the power could not be used again. There is no legal barrier to a President committing the men and money and materials of this country to any scheme that might engage his personal suffrage. For example, it is within the bounds of possibility that an American President might commit this country to a definite course of action in the Far East and in any situation growing out of the difficulties in the Far East, without the knowledge and consent of his Secretary of State, his Cabinet, Congress, or the people at large. When the time came to invoke such an agreement it would be "put across" to the accompaniment of a great deal of hollow talk about our moral obligations and the sacred word of the American people. We might, for instance, find ourselves committed in advance to an imperialists' war against Russia in company with Japan, France, and Poland. The people would be told that they were embarking on a war in "defense of civilization against Russian barbarism." Years later they would discover that they had really fought because they had previously been committed to such a course by a President who took full advantage of the terrifying powers available to him. *These powers should be investigated and immediately curtailed.*

What I Believe*

By CONRAD AIKEN

TO ask a man what he believes is perhaps tantamount to asking him why he lives; and to expect from him an answer even approximately complete is like serving him with a writ of habeas corpus. Explanation would not be complete short of extinction; it would involve a kind of suicide. For a more relative and tentative answer it would be convenient, certainly, to have a creed, to belong to a sect, to be a member of a political party, to subscribe to one or another system of morals, or merely to prefer one kind of civilization to another. In the absence of any such useful short-cuts, and faced by an interior and exterior world which appears to be a confusion of relationships and relativities, and of which the values are constantly changing, one first of all, instinctively, takes refuge in what Mr. Santayana has called "animal faith." One is "here," simply, involved in a scene and sustained by it. We are born of a system, and into it, and our birth is our first act of acceptance. If we are helpless in that first of all acceptances, we are not demonstrably much less helpless in our later ones. Not being myself a metaphysician, or skilled in dialectics, or expert in epistemology, I gladly leave to others the task of estimating what margin we have, if any, as free agents in this institution—as also the question whether, in accepting or refusing, believing or disbelieving, choosing to live or to die, we are not compelled to our choice by forces beyond our control. Will it be safe to say that it is the function of the sane, or healthy, to live, or believe, and of the insane, or unhealthy, to disbelieve and die? And in this respect can we say that belief is perhaps merely a measure of energy, as courage is perhaps a measure of desire?

I am speaking, of course, for the moment, of belief only on the plane of animal acceptance, or animal faith—we might simply call it the desire to live. This is the fundamental act of faith, and for many people I see no reason why it should not be sufficient. Merely to be alive, even on the simplest plane of consciousness, is a tremendous business. That this act of faith varies in quantity or quality needs no saying—and that it varies even in the individual, from day to day, all of us know who are at all in the habit of observing our own behavior. In accordance as our energies are raised or lowered, and external and internal stimuli presented or removed, increased or diminished, we form, break, or alter our habits and appetites. If this is true in general, it is particularly true in the absence of any major beliefs—or Beliefs—whether religious, moral, aesthetic, social, or intellectual. But whether with or without any such fixed "direction," the man who becomes a failure in his work or personal affairs is not the same man as when he was successful. At such times there is a rapid selective shedding of many of our more purely "automatic" acceptances—lowered energies call for a lowering of the budget; habits which had before seemed useful or delightful now seem burdensome; we may abandon a whole system of social observances and substitute another; change our scene; or, in short, cease to

believe in the efficacy of a clean collar or good manners or pleasant surroundings or clear-headedness. The animal faith, weakened, tends to concentrate itself more and more in the primary instincts—it wants merely to eat, to be warm, and to sleep. In short, with an impaired belief, or desire to live, it retreats, in such degree as it feels necessary, from consciousness. Since consciousness has entailed suffering, it wants to move down the scale toward unconsciousness, or death, unless arrested at some intermediate stage by a group of lower or simpler appetites which will enable it still, in a fashion, to exist.

To many, this state of things must appear very disagreeable. It is perhaps not pleasant to think of one's behavior as so automatic, or thermostatic, or to conceive of consciousness as in any degree a kind of function of biological success. Nor do I claim to know that consciousness is merely a function of biological success—one would have to define success, and I prefer to evade that, merely observing that there are many degrees of consciousness. The predicament, however, is a real one; and appears to become worse as the individual moves up the scale of civilization. In direct ratio as this occurs, and as he becomes more conscious, not only is he farther and farther removed from the level of simple animal faith, or the level on which he can quite simply accept it, but also his credulity is itself weakened. More and more his faiths must recommend themselves to reason; with each successive plane of awareness new terms for faith must be found—less concrete, more abstract, more comprehensive. From religion he perhaps moves to philosophy, from philosophy to science—and from science to what? In recent years we have seen that even when he has reached the realm of pure observation, he is still sometimes not content—here we have the extraordinary spectacle of the scientist endeavoring to force a shotgun marriage between science and mysticism. This is interesting, if only because it so conveniently proves how strong is our inherited will-to-believe in something vaguely "divine." The morning walk to the laboratory almost inevitably takes us past a church.

But this is very probably only a momentary regression, a moment of atavistic despair. It is only a racial habit that makes us—in a romantic and nostalgic sense—demand more of science than it can give. Granted that we must become aware of the limits of possible knowledge, that we can never look a First Cause in the face, and that the infinite everywhere precedes and succeeds the finite which is our little field of observation, nevertheless the fact remains that the limits of knowledge are ultimate, not immediate, and that we can never reach them. We have, literally, all the room in the world. The conscious life of man becomes therefore an absolutely unanswerable, but relatively answerable "Why?" In short, I can see no reason why man will not presently give up all major beliefs, including a belief in his own importance and destiny, and simply surrender himself to what is perhaps the first principle of his own present state as a conscious creature—an inexhaustible curiosity.

It will be gathered, from this brief résumé, for which I

*The seventh of a series of articles on this subject by well-known men and women. Others will appear in subsequent issues. EDITOR, THE NATION.

claim no originality whatever, for it is much-trodden ground, that I myself do not believe—or, at any rate, very much!—even in that last resort of belief, Man. I mean, in any ultimate sense. He is an ephemeral. In what direction he chooses collectively to evolve, biologically or mentally or socially, is of little or no instant concern to me—I do not vote for one course rather than another, for I do not care sufficiently to assume any responsibility. To such immediate and practical questions, for example, as his election of a communistic or capitalistic organization of society, I do not consider myself wise enough or farseeing enough to have an answer. If I chose to use my influence one way or the other, it would be for personal reasons rather than theoretic.

This does not mean that I am not interested, and keenly, in that problem, as in all other problems involved in man's evolution. In fact, this brings me naturally to a statement of the one sort of belief which it seems to me possible for the emancipated man to cherish—namely, as I hinted above, a belief in consciousness. Consciousness is our supreme gift. Not only does it contain—in every sense—all that we value, but also it is the fundamental and indeed the only means by which we are *able* to value. To see, to remember, to know, to feel, to understand, as much as possible—isn't this perhaps the most obviously indicated of motives or beliefs, the noblest and most all-comprehending of ideas which it is relatively possible for us to realize? To understand all is not merely to forgive all—it is also to accept all, and on whatever plane one wishes. If to be a genius is to be, as someone has said, an extender of man's consciousness, then there can be no monopoly of genius by the few; it is

the common inheritance of all mankind—a property, or possible property, in which we all share. Weininger made some admirable remarks about this. "The great man," he said, "is not only the truest to himself, the most unforgetful, the one to whom errors and lies are most hateful and intolerable; he is also the most social, at the same time the most self-contained, and the most open man. The genius is altogether a higher form, not merely intellectually, but also morally." And then he proceeds to identify genius with consciousness. "Consciousness and consciousness alone is in itself moral; all unconsciousness is immoral, and all immorality is unconscious. . . . Universal comprehension, full consciousness, and perfect timelessness are an ideal condition, ideal even for gifted men; genius is an innate imperative, which never becomes a fully accomplished fact in human beings. . . . Genius is, in its essence, nothing but the full completion of the idea of man, and therefore every man ought to have some quality of it, and it should be regarded as a possible principle for every one. . . . A man may become a genius if he wishes to."

Weininger is here speaking for the race. Consciousness is the highest, the only morality: it is the morality which contains all other moralities, the aesthetic which contains all other aesthetics—to achieve it in the maximum degree is not only to solve most incidental problems, it is also in itself the supreme delight of which we are capable. If we begin by understanding ourselves, as far as we can, we progress thus toward an understanding of man and his potentialities.

This seems to me a sufficient field for belief and will. Let us be as conscious as possible.

A Program for Revolt

By DEVERE ALLEN

THAT the mood of political rebellion is widespread and is reaching proportions which exceed the customary preelection grumbling of agrarian elements, must be clear to everyone. That it is taking a more radical turn, with a definite trend away from the laissez-faire liberalism of previous election years, was indicated by the Cleveland conference of the League for Independent Political Action held on July 9 and 10. Here was no flirtation with Rooseveltian progressivism, vintage of 1932; here was no program of boring from within; here instead was a positive program of assault from outside the ranks of the Republican and Democratic parties. Those who "wish to arrest the cause of inevitable change," said Dr. John Dewey to the gathering, "will support the Republicans, while a union with the Democrats is the logical course for those who wish the appearance of progress without its reality."

The conference adopted a platform of its own, intending to urge it upon the various candidates for Congress to whom it expects to give substantial aid in the fall campaign. While this was based in a large measure on the Four-Year Presidential Plan which the League published last January as an educational document, it departed from the longer plan at a few points and was considerably more thoroughgoing. Its cogent six hundred words stood out in sharp contrast to the declarations of other political groups, not reaching quite

half the length of the deliberately short platform of the Democratic Party. The League's platform affirms the solidarity of the League with the worker and farmer and declares for direct federal unemployment relief; a thirty-hour week to increase employment; unemployment insurance; old-age pensions; drastic taxation of large incomes, inheritances, and speculative land values; public ownership of "such public utilities as water power, gas and electricity, coal, oil, and railroads;" tax relief for farm property; aid to cooperatives; generous farm credit through refinancing by the government of small farm owners under the amortization plan; creation of a federal marketing agency; lowered tariffs. It favors the reorganization of the entire banking system, with full publicity for all transactions; establishment of the postal savings system as a people's bank to cover all departments of the banking business; stabilization of prices at a higher level but with due protection to real wages; free speech legislation; abolition of the injunction in labor disputes; calling of a national constitutional convention to modernize the government; drastic disarmament; abolition of compulsory military training. In foreign affairs it calls for revision of the Versailles Treaty; fullest cooperation with the League of Nations and entry into the World Court; recognition of Soviet Russia; cancellation of war debts in return for European cooperation in disarmament; abandonment of our mili-

tary interventions in Latin America and elsewhere; and the initiation of world economic conferences to reduce tariff barriers and promote world trade and monetary cooperation. The question of prohibition, because of a desire to emphasize its comparative unimportance, was definitely relegated to a minor role, the conference stating that "on democratic principles we recognize the right of the people to vote effectively on the abolition or the modification of the Eighteenth Amendment," but going on to state that "We condemn the Republican and Democratic Parties for subordinating urgent economic issues to the liquor question."

The opposition to any indorsement of Norman Thomas and James Maurer, anticipated by some observers inside and outside the League, did not materialize. There were a few who voiced their belief that such an indorsement would be unwise from the viewpoint of strategy, but most of these confessed their intent to vote for the Socialist national ticket on election day. Not only was the League's support proffered to the Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates of the Socialist Party, but, following a clause safeguarding the League's partial difference from the Socialists in its long view of political development, the Socialist platform was described as the best of those offered by the various parties. The precise wording of the preamble on the Thomas indorsement was as follows:

While we do not necessarily support every feature in the ultimate program of the Socialist Party, we do believe that in the present election the candidacy and platform of Norman Thomas and James Maurer are infinitely preferable to those of other parties, and we therefore urge all our members and friends to work and vote for them.

One of the most significant portions of the platform is that section of the preamble dealing with a call for local organization. This has been the League's central conception of its immediate usefulness, beyond the constant education of the electorate in the need of a new political alignment. This paragraph says:

The creation of strong local and State parties committed to a program of protecting the interests of farmers, manual workers, and white-collar folk is, however, absolutely basic, and no national movement can develop without them. We urge, therefore, that all our members and friends use their full efforts to assist in organizing their wards, their cities, and their States, and thus build the new party from the bottom up. In many localities this will mean active cooperation with the Socialist Party; in others, such as Minnesota and Chicago, with the Farmer-Labor Party; while in other localities our members should help in forming new groups for this purpose.

The specific reference to the white-collar worker was elaborated later in an address given by Professor Paul H. Douglas of the University of Chicago, one of the founders and a vice-president of the League. Numerically, he pointed out, the white-collar workers are the most important class in society, and it is up to them to decide whether they are to line up with the farmers and manual workers or with the owners of industry. In Europe, he said, they have often been found on the side of reaction, and their general tendency in the United States has been the same. There was every reason, Dr. Douglas held, why the white-collar workers should join in the movement for a new social and economic order. Even in boom times, they have not been well paid;

they have found during the depression that they have a genuine stake in the stability of industry because they have suffered loss of jobs or pay cuts just as have the manual workers; and the investments they labored for and pinched to save have been wiped out.

Despite sweltering heat the meetings were held with an excellent attendance and a keen interest on the part of the local press and public. Cleveland was carried for La Follette in 1924, and although the pseudo-liberalism of Franklin D. Roosevelt has attracted many Cleveland progressives to his colors already, and influenced others to swallow him under protest, by no means have all the liberals in the city thus yielded. The Saturday afternoon meeting held at the Women's City Club was crowded, and when Howard Williams and John W. Herring, the League's secretaries, excoriated the spurious-liberalism of Roosevelt and called for a change of tactics toward the old parties, there was instant and enthusiastic applause. Through the following sessions both the heat and the interest were maintained at the same high level. Oswald Garrison Villard analyzed the collapse of leadership at Washington, and Professor Dewey, speaking on "Democracy Joins the Unemployed," asserted:

We have permitted business and financial autocracy to reach such a point that its logical political counterpart is a Mussolini unless a violent revolution brings forth a Lenin. The business of forming a new party is the business of educating the people until the dullest and the most partisan see the connection between economic life and politics.

Representative Paul John Kvale of Minnesota, the lone Farmer-Labor congressman, discussed convincingly the problems facing an independent in Congress and laid particular stress upon the grave conflict between the Executive and Congress, which has been at the bottom of the entire fight during the present session.

The conference was closed on Sunday evening by Walter J. Millard, the expert on proportional representation and the problems of municipal government, who warned the gathering that the mere organization of a new party would not take us to the promised land, that there must be a complete making-over of certain forms of our government. A. J. Muste, head of Brookwood College, won the gathering's approval with a frank address contending that labor must be the basis of any worthwhile new party, and James Dick, a textile worker from New England, deeply stirred the audience with his story of the plight of the textile workers who have come to such a pass that many girls are actually earning, he stated, only one dollar and sixty-five cents per week.

Although the conference was not large, politically considered, members of the League came to attend it from almost every State of the East and Middle West—from Utah, Colorado, Connecticut, Minnesota, and Florida. The national committee of the League now consists of sixty-seven members representing twenty-six States. Possibly the most important single outcome of the conference may be a more representative congress of various political groups which, it is hoped by the League, will be summoned early next year.

From the beginning, the League itself has not been a political party, nor has it ever intended to become one. It has steadily believed that its work of education could, however, bring nearer the day when a large mass political movement of the workers and farmers might emerge and either take power or at least establish itself as a substantial oppo-

sition. Whether that can be rationally hoped for in the near future depends, probably, less upon any organization whatsoever than upon the turn of events over which there is no control. But if such a movement becomes a genuine possibility, the League means to be ready as a unifying factor.

In the Driftway

THE Drifter should not like to be classed with those well-fed clergymen and warmly clothed public speakers who proclaim the spiritual blessings of depression. But it has been responsible for one material blessing for which he cannot help shouting, namely the fact that there are fewer and slower automobiles on the highways on summer Sundays. Before October, 1929, a week-end in the country took on the sinister aspect of a training period for the ordeal on Sunday evening which could be counted on to wipe out the effect and even the memory of relaxation and a fresh breeze, particularly if one happened to be riding with a driver who felt obliged to pass every car in sight and considered all roads one-way thoroughfares.

* * * * *

HOW the roads have changed. The long lines of traffic, two and three cars wide, that once led up to the bottle necks of cities have almost disappeared. The air space from exhaust to exhaust is appreciably longer and sweeter. Our great roads are in a way to become paths of pleasantness instead of noisy, malodorous streams of machines full of speed-stricken human beings. For speed, too, has lessened. Keeping up with the Joneses does not require as much speed as it used to, for the Joneses haven't a new car either. To be sure, one still meets the driver in his new car who passes other cars on blind curves, and the Drifter still feels that those little signs should read more often than not: Slow Down—Fool Ahead. But one has only to look at the figures from Detroit to see how much scarcer is the man who buys a new car every year. The two-car garage these days is likely to contain one 1928 motor-car and Johnny's scooter.

* * * * *

WITHIN six months, in fact, the Drifter has seen more relics of the machine age on the public roads than he thought existed. A new top from Sears Roebuck put on at home does wonders for a 1925 Buick, and though the hills must be negotiated more slowly, still it does get to the top and there's no instalment to pay next month. For the first time in years one is able to see what the models of three years back looked like and the Drifter suspects that the garage, that useful refuge which in the new-car-every-year days retreated into alleys and didn't even bother to have a mechanic available on Sunday, is experiencing a boom. As for the Model T, the species seems to be increasing in number as the vintage grows progressively more ancient. The Drifter is looking forward with great anticipation to the day when he will meet upon some magnificent four-span highway one of those ancient motor-cars in which four people sat back to back and father in a white linen duster did the cranking on the side.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Roosevelt and Water Power

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In your editorial on Governor Roosevelt this week you have probably inadvertently run into a serious error in fact. You state, in effect, that while Governor Roosevelt's power policy in New York has been satisfactory to you, he has not yet made any suggestion as to the embodiment of this policy in national terms. In his speech delivered at St. Paul, Minnesota, on April 18, 1932, he dealt with two subjects in what seems to me perfectly specific terms. The first was the tariff and the second was water power. With regard to water power he stated his New York State policy and following that said:

It is neither radical, nor a violation of any principles of sound business, for me to state in definite terms that public servants with a proper regard for the interests of the people themselves must exert every effort to restore the fundamentals of public control. And this applies not only in every State capitol but also in the control by the national government over those great sources of power which fall under the jurisdiction of the national government.

Those who have read the papers these past few days have seen an example of the vast national scope of the public-utility structure. Interrelated companies stretch into literally dozens of States. Investors, customers, and management constitute a national community of interest of enormous importance. I wonder if it is not true that even those far in the upper reaches of such a structure would not themselves recognize the soundness of national public protection of all of the associated factors in this structure.

A very deep study over many years makes it clearer to me with every passing day that where a public service like the transmission of electricity passes beyond State lines and becomes interstate in its actual operation, in such a case the control cannot effectively be maintained by States alone or through agreements between neighboring States. That problem is national in its scope and can be solved only by the firm establishment of national control.

Electricity is a great unifying interest doing more to make us a united nation than any other material factor. To control it for the common good requires national thinking by a national party.

New York, July 13

RAYMOND MOLEY

I Teach Socialism

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: A business man recently asked me if the high school carried a course in socialism. And when I replied in the negative, he asked why and if I did not think it would be a wise thing. Undoubtedly it would be exceedingly wise—from the standpoint of society.

I teach socialism, for I believe it is the only effective break-water—if we are not already too far out to sea—for that ever-growing wave of revolution bearing on its crest the chaotic driftwood of a completely new order, the new regime, which, from all appearances, could be ushered in in the United States only with a liberal baptism of blood.

I teach socialism because I am, I fondly hope, fairly sane. How any teacher of high-school history and sociology, pretending to think at all, can still mouth piously the old fetishes relative to the two good old parties is beyond my comprehension. I therefore teach socialism deliberately, because the ideal of

that doctrine seems to me more nearly in accord with the modern scientific approach to a problem—used everywhere but in politics and business.

I teach it because at least a large minority of high-school students is ready for a badly needed change. That minority is thoughtfully, if somewhat gropingly, aghast at the mess of our imperialistic capitalism and at every turn is asking "Why?" and "What?" and asking it of its teachers. And what are the teachers answering? Almost invariably nothing.

In short, as a teacher, I am trying earnestly to teach the Golden Rule, and I hope the life of Eugene V. Debs will continue to be my inspiration.

Dearborn, Mich., May 25

ANNE TEMPLAR

The De Reszkes

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I am collecting material for a biography of Jean and Edouard de Reszke and I am anxious to obtain first-hand accounts, in letters or otherwise, of incidents and anecdotes, in which they figured. No bit of information or recollection will be without importance to me.

Material sent to me at 26 Grove Street will be respectfully treated and promptly returned.

New York, July 10

CLARA M. LEISER

In an Indian Prison

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Your readers will be interested in the following letter written by Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya on the train while she was being removed from the Bombay prison to a prison in Belgaum. The letter, addressed to some of her friends in India, has been just received in this country. The text follows:

Aboard the train, April 19, 1932

MY DEAR FRIENDS: I am writing this on my way to Belgaum, where I am being removed. I suppose you know I am in "C" class. It is good. It is the only way one gets to know what prison life really is. The treatment of political prisoners, I think, must be taken up immediately by all English people. It is a perfect disgrace. Fancy government openly saying that no difference is to be made between ordinary convicts and political prisoners! This raises a big international question that cannot be ignored. We are now deprived of all writing materials and the women are allowed no underclothes. Each sari that we wear weighs five pounds and we are supplied two of these and two blouses. Our bedding consists of one coir mat and a very rough blanket. So we have to use our spare clean sari as a bedsheet and cover both. Then, the abusing of prisoners in foul and filthy language by every official from the superintendent to the warders is dreadful.

Within four days of my incarceration I saw enough to determine me to place this matter before the jail committee when it came round. So Miss Slade and I put all this before the committee, which made some strong remarks in their book. It so upset the jail officials that Miss Slade and I were immediately shifted to another part of the prison and completely isolated from the others as a punishment, and now I am being finally removed to Belgaum.

It is interesting being in "C" class and sharing the general life. I have been losing about one pound a day. But I expect I shall get used to it in course of time. I don't know when I shall be able to write again as I can only send one letter once in three months.

[Signed] KAMALA

New York, June 22

HARIDAS T. MUZUMDAR

The Balance Sheet

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The inclosed "budget" for 1932-33 of my brother, managing 160 acres of good, unencumbered Indiana land for his father's heirs and 200 acres under a \$2,000 mortgage for his mother, is an interesting commentary upon the seriousness of the agricultural situation in the corn belt. Considering that this document typifies the situation of millions of other farmers of the Middle West, it is obvious that neglect of it by our political and financial leaders is a certain road to national disaster.

Here is the budget:

Mother's farm	
Fertilizer	\$40.00
Ma's tax	234.27
Interest	137.50
Home tax	37.00
Home interest.....	120.00
	<hr/>
	\$568.77

Estate Farm	
Fertilizer	\$35.00
Tax	300.94
	<hr/>
	\$335.94

1,400 bushels corn at 20¢..	\$280
900 bushels oats at 15¢...	135
Cash rent	35
	<hr/>
	\$450

1,000 bushels corn at 20¢..	\$200
800 bushels oats at 15¢...	120
Cash rent	35
	<hr/>
	\$355

This budget includes the 10 per cent penalty, as the first instalment will be due Monday. (Cost of labor added and subtracted does not alter the figures.)

Berkeley, Cal., July 1

E. C.

The Cause and Cure of Crises

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Ray Vance says in his article, *Has the Crisis Run Its Course?* that a "combination of physical and financial conditions brought on the panic." So far, so good; but it seems that a more definite explanation is in order. Before me lies a graph covering 141 years of our history, based on authentic data. It was prepared by the Cleveland Trust Company, and has been, at least in part, widely copied. On the seventeen depressions therein noted (during 117 years, from 1812 through 1929) eleven were consequent upon or connected with the three major wars. In connection with each war three depressions are pictured and named—one at the beginning of the war, followed by the "primary post-war," then the "secondary post-war" depressions. The "debt repudiation" depression of the early 40's and the depression of 1884 are each near enough to the first two of these major wars to be fairly counted as part and parcel of the dislocation. This list omits four depressions attendant upon the French-English-Indian warfare, the French hostilities so-called, and the *Peace (sic!)* of Amiens. No account is taken of the Mexican imbroglio, the accompanying depression of which was slight. The remaining six depressions were of short duration—four named as "panics," two not named at all, such was their unimportance. Generally speaking, the three primary war depressions were deeper but less protracted than the secondary depressions; the exception being the 1929 depression, which saw the line running a bit lower than that which began in 1920, touching, that is, a new low. To sum up, this graph shows approximately 24 years—exactly one-fifth of the 120 years that have elapsed since the outbreak of the war of 1812—as having been given over to financial depressions varying in duration and

severity. If it is true that the present one is the worst we have ever experienced, the more need there is for assessing the blame.

In this comment the writer is far less concerned with the possible duration of depressions than with showing how they are hitched up to the stupidity, the futility, and the crime of war, but nevertheless comparisons are intriguing. We are nearly through the third year of the "secondary" depression—in point of fact, the *third* depression consequent upon the world war.

The secondary depression of the war of 1812 lasted four years and that of the Civil War six years; and Mr. Vance tells us today that recovery is "more than a year away." Even that prediction will be welcomed by many who are deeply submerged in the mental depression that always accompanies financial trouble. I would be more definite and say a year and six months away, counting from the first of July, which will bring us into 1934, a period in the gamut of depressions that (in seven out of eight I have been studying) has *lifted* the lowered line of the graph in its journey toward the norm; the one exception came in 1826 when the line of the graph approached but did not quite succeed in reaching the normal level. And the fortunes of the ninth war depression since 1812 are still in the lap of the gods.

Aside from the light that this graph sheds upon the character and the duration of recurring cycles as they affect human activity, its pictographic record presents the most damaging and convincing case against war that could be desired by even the most skeptical militarist or the most timid and cautious pacifist. Here we have undeniable proof of what war connotes in the matter of a country's financial stability—a practical argument telling us why this business of settling disputes by mass murder should stop. Not the duration of depressions but the major cause of them ought to occupy the thoughts of Americans right now.

New York, June 27

BLANCHE WATSON

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: You publish an elaborate article by Ray Vance purporting to prove that the crisis has run its course and that before long we are going to start on another boom.

It seems to me that Mr. Vance's article is based on one fundamental misconception. He tells us how "current debts have been sharply decreased" and "debts and open book accounts and instalment purchases reduced even more sharply." "The supply of goods available for consumption has been sharply reduced" and so on. All this is based on the theory that our present depression is caused by overproduction of consumption goods. But it is not. It is caused by overproduction of the means of production. Mr. Vance does not attempt to prove to us that the ability of the United States to produce steel has been in any way reduced since 1929. We can produce as much or more of every metal; as much or more electric power; we have as many railroads and car factories, automobile and truck factories, cement plants, cotton mills, coal mines—everything, all the way down the line.

There appears to have been very little overproduction of consumers' goods in 1929. Much of the distribution was in the hands of big concerns, which could look ahead and adjust their orders according to their future needs. The whole system, from producer to ultimate consumer, had been speeded up and goods went right down the chute. But with production goods it was different. It was considered a crime to suggest that we could have too many steel mills or automobile factories. Now we have them, and there is no possibility of running them at more than half time; so we are in for a long period of chronic depression.

Pasadena, Cal., July 1

UPTON SINCLAIR

Finance

Ottawa Seeks a Formula

LAUSANNE settled reparations with a proviso, and at Ottawa the representatives of the British nations are grappling with the problem of expediting trade within the empire. If they succeed in doing so the outside world will almost certainly benefit; for while every effort will be made to stimulate commerce between Great Britain and her possessions and dominions, the most far-sighted leaders of British opinion recognize that a policy of trying to reserve the British markets exclusively for the British would be foredoomed to failure. Great Britain, though she must import one-half to two-thirds of her total supply of foodstuffs, cannot eat all that the dominions produce, while the dominions, though they import huge amounts of finished goods, cannot absorb all that the mother country manufactures.

So, on the eve of the conference, we find the London *Economist* maintaining that the only wise policy for Ottawa to pursue is to attempt a lowering of tariffs all around, instead of raising them against third parties. That fine free-trade journal points out that if the purpose of international trade is to obtain the greatest advantage for all concerned tariffs are scarcely necessary to achieve this result. It will be best achieved where no barriers exist. But while the protectionists of South Africa and Canada might never be able to find a logical answer to that proposition, they are far from accepting it. Statements of the dominion representatives, prior to the conference, have quite generally indicated a determination to look out for the local infant industries and to give them the measure of protection they need in order to reach maturity.

The middle ground is occupied by groups like the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, which assert that British industries should enjoy a larger measure of tariff preference against foreigners in the dominion markets, and that even the preferential tariff should be low enough to give the British a fair competitive chance with the local manufacturer. At the same time, care should be taken (in a manner not specified) not to alienate those great markets which both the old country and the dominions enjoy in the outside world. One of the few concrete suggestions made thus far has to do with "complementary production," meaning, apparently, that the dominions and possessions shall refrain from developing industries which can be better developed in Great Britain. Why, to cite an imaginary case, should Canada strive to outdo Sheffield in cutlery, or Australia to equal Manchester in cotton textiles, when the two dominions can obtain better goods and cheaper goods by purchasing them with wheat, wool, and crude copper?

The answer to that question is to be found in the simple statement that the territorial division of labor—each region producing those commodities which soil, climate, available materials, and human aptitudes best fit it to produce—does not work according to theory. One reason why it does not is the impossibility of keeping the output of foods and crude materials in balance, throughout the world markets, with the manufactured products for which they are exchanged. It is a significant fact that the raw-materials countries are debtor countries; the money they borrow disguises the fact that they are piling up a deficit in the international balance sheet until the crash comes and they find that they must produce two tons of materials to pay a debt which one ton would formerly pay. The remedy, as they see it, is to free themselves of the foreign creditor by doing their manufacturing at home. Will the Ottawa conference find a better remedy?

S. PALMER HARMAN

Books

Strict Acre

By JOSEPH AUSLANDER

Who dares dispute Apollo's golden speed
Or grip the lathered harness in his fist?
Let him presume upon a lesser reed;
Let him accomplish a more tranquil tryst.
Ah risk no trespass on that cloudy acre
Where those ethereal hooves in thunder gleam:
Content you with one spark the Lightning-Shaker
Sheds on your broken, brief Icarian dream.

Rather pursue the pungent yoke and furrow
And drop the barley seed and spread the oat
Than tempt the peril of the sudden arrow,
The shaggy god and the capricious goat:
The Samnite in his little field may bruise
His heel on some gold head of Syracuse.

Prelude

By CONRAD AIKEN

Thus boasting thus grandiloquent he stood
thus eloquent thus orotund he spoke
thus posing like an acrobat he paused
thus like an actor loosed his syllable
the bright, the brief, the brave, the seeming certain,
and smirked

upon that stage of his own making
There in the dirty wings on dirty sawdust
against the trumpets of a vivid world.

The Artist as a Youngish Man

The Journal of Arnold Bennett. 1896-1910. The Viking Press. \$4.

SEVERAL romantic young persons of my acquaintance have taken stern exception to Mr. Bennett's diary. He is so mercenary, they say; he not only counts his words as he writes them, but in the first week of January of every year he totes up the number of words he has produced the year before and carefully writes down just how much, in hard cash, his work has brought in. If Mr. Bennett had been a house-builder, and had noted the price of the materials he bought and the profit he had made on them, it would be perfectly permissible. For house-building is a trade. But writing novels and magazine articles is, bless all our little hearts, an art! An artist mustn't think about money or words; he must, every time he sits down to write, go into a trance, summon his muse, allow her to manipulate his typewriter, and with the greatest amazement finally read what she has written. After a while it turns out that the novel is finished; the compositor, who sets it in type, knows how long it is, but of course he does not discuss such vulgar matters with the author; the publisher, who issues the book, pays the royalty checks, but the author tosses these mundane mementos into the waste-basket or into the lap of his

wife, who manages his affairs. No artist, so the legend runs, can properly conduct himself in any less casual manner.

Arnold Bennett was not that kind of artist. About half his working day, so his diary informs us, he spent writing magazine articles for money. The other half was spent usually in writing a novel—for which also he received money in rather sizable sums. No artisan ever worked harder or more faithfully at his trade; few English novelists have written novels which surpass those of Mr. Bennett at his best. That all the while he was writing he should have been conscious of just how far he had got, and that he should have asked in advance the price that an editor was to pay him for an article, does not make him any less a fine writer, any less an artist, any less a born novelist who could not help writing because writing was his trade, his profession, his art, and his first passion.

The other count against Mr. Bennett, as revealed in his diary, is that he was not an interesting person. His was, it is said, a dull, middle-class mind in a complaining, vulgar body. And that, also, I should deny. He was surely middle-class, and he wrote mainly about middle-class people. His love of luxury, when he finally had money to buy it, was middle-class, too. But he was not dull, and his vulgarities were the result of his curiosity, which never ceased to motivate him, about people, about things, about life. In his diary he writes about himself; about how he felt, what he ate, whom he talked to, the women he made love to, the books he read, and about how he valued what he wrote. His estimates of music, plays, and books are always interesting and often just. His description of places is no less so. He is reasonably aware of what sort of man he is: "My leading sentiment is my own real superiority, not the inferiority of others." "I am so wrapped up in myself that I, if anyone, ought to succeed in a relative self-perfection." "I do not like to think that I am dependent spiritually, to even a slight degree, on anyone. I do not like to think that I am not absolutely complete and sufficient in myself to myself." "I went to bed with influenza, but found that I hadn't got it." Of "Clayhanger" he said, with considerable modesty, "I really doubt whether, as a whole, this book is good. It assuredly isn't within ten miles of Dostoevski." And he had another sort of modesty: "H. W. Massingham wrote me yesterday inviting me to contribute to the *Nation*. No editorial invitation has ever flattered me as much as this." He wrote quickly and steadily, but that he did not write carelessly is indicated when he says: "Having finished a novel I could not cut it down, because I should have satisfied myself that it contained nothing inessential. . . . The notion that anything can be taken from a finished work of art without leaving a gap seems to me monstrous."

Finally Mr. Bennett has been described as a man without feeling. Although he declares himself entirely self-sufficient, he made two significant entries in his diary which might prove the contrary. On Friday, June 15, 1906, he wrote: "At 5 p. m. on this day, in the forest of Fontainebleau, I became engaged to marry Eleanora." The next item, dated Friday, August 3, is as follows: "At 11 a. m. on this day, at Caniel, my engagement to Eleanora was broken off." If he had thought less of the breach, surely he would have written more. But where on other occasions he is not above boasting of his triumphs with women, here he recorded the bare facts only. No boasting of his success; no explanation of his failure. Eleanora Green's name is not mentioned subsequently in this volume of the diary. And his next entry was dated July 19, 1907, nearly a year later, incidentally two weeks after his marriage to Marguerite Soulié.

It is enough to say of Mr. Bennett that he is in his diary nearly as interesting as his most interesting character, Edwin Clayhanger. He is a good deal like several of his characters.

They were curious as he is, they were a little solemn about themselves, they were observing, fond of money, hard-working, reserved. He told more about them than he does about himself. That perhaps is the diary's most serious limitation.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

Westermarck on Ethics

Ethical Relativity. By Edward Westermarck. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$3.75.

WE commonly say that a certain dish is "good," that a certain poem is "beautiful," and that a certain action is "right." The forms of the three statements are identical, but in the case of the first nearly everyone would admit that we do not, when we use it, actually mean to affirm what is literally implied. It is merely a figure of speech, a way of saying that we "like" the dish in question, and we do not intend to assert that the latter possesses an objective gustatorial "goodness" independent of ourselves. In the case of the "beautiful" poem the world is, on the other hand, pretty evenly divided between those who maintain that the statement which affirms its "beauty" is a statement of exactly the same kind as the statement that the dish is "good" and those who would declare that "beauty" is an objective quality which certain persons may and certain persons may not have the ability to perceive, but which exists quite independent of the fact that any individual does or does not "like" the poem in question. And when we come to the "rightness" of an action, most writers on ethics, at least, would affirm that it assuredly is essentially different from the "goodness" of a dish, and that such "rightness" most certainly is an objective quality.

The fact remains, nevertheless, that it is perfectly possible to deny that the objective "beauty" of a poem and the objective "rightness" of an action are any more demonstrable than the "goodness" of a dish, and the result of such a denial is, of course, to proclaim a thorough going relativity. If "beauty" and "rightness" are objective qualities, then aesthetics and ethics are, potentially at least, normative sciences. If, on the other hand, the conceptions of "beauty" and "rightness" are, like the conception of gustatorial "goodness," merely examples of the fallacy of misplaced concreteness, then it is logically as absurd to attempt to erect a normative science of aesthetics or of ethics as it would be to attempt to prove that *escargots à la Bordelaise* (or corned beef and cabbage) either is or is not "good."

Though Professor Westermarck does not use precisely this illustration it will serve, I think, to suggest in as brief a form as is possible the subject of his discussion, and it is hardly necessary to add that he argues in favor of an uncompromising relativity. In "The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas" he studied moral opinion genetically; here he attempts to defend philosophically and psychologically the position which he was formerly led to take up. Moral judgments are, he maintains, the result of a specific class of emotions which he calls "moral emotions," and the apparent objectivity of these judgments is merely the result of an illusion. "The main contentions in this book" are "that the moral consciousness is ultimately based on emotions, that the moral judgment lacks validity, that the moral values are not absolute but relative to the emotions they express." In other words we regard as "moral" those things of which we approve, and we approve of those things which are in accord with our individual taste even though—as Professor Westermarck would insist—taste in such matters is a thing infinitely more complex than taste in food and, unlike this latter, is capable of being very profoundly influenced, not merely by custom and habit, but also by intellectual considerations which give form and consistency to a group of tastes.

A monograph of this sort cannot, of course, exercise an influence comparable to that exercised by the same author's earlier genetic studies. Its general effect is of something largely academic while "The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas" belongs with, for example, Sumner's "Folk Ways" and Havellock Ellis's "Studies" among the books which, in determining the intellectual atmosphere of the earlier twentieth century, played a part perhaps disproportionate to their purely philosophic importance. Nevertheless, "Ethical Relativity" is an essay which ought to be read by everyone interested in the attempt to analyze the intellectual implications of the widespread willingness on the part of the general public to accept some such formula as that which states the identity between mores and morals. And in this connection perhaps the most interesting of Professor Westermarck's contentions is that which he opposes to the objection that "moral relativity" leads to moral anarchy. We are, he says in effect, no less guided by our tastes because we know that they are *merely* tastes, and there is no reason why our moral preferences should be any less effective because we recognize them as nothing more than preferences. Our ethics, in a word, may be relative, but they are relative to a total situation of which we are a part and therefore have as much stability and as much urgency as it is desirable that moral principles should have.

There are, I think, certain objections which might be raised to this convenient way out of the dilemma into which we seem to be led by an acceptance of the belief that morality is a relative matter. So far, however, no one seems to have suggested a better one.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Revolution as a Fine Art

Coup d'Etat: The Technique of Revolution. By Curzio Malaparte. Translated by Sylvia Saunders. E. P. Dutton and Company. \$2.50.

REVOLUTIONS, coups d'etat, general strikes, terrorism, sabotage, barricades, skirmishes, massacres, executions—these are among the most fascinating episodes of the great human tragi-comedy. Torn from the intimate connection with the main propelling force of class and group interests, however, their descriptions are no more helpful to understanding social history than would be the mere photograph of a dynamo to an understanding of the nature of electromagnetism. "Coup d'Etat" fails primarily because it provides such descriptions without revealing those intimate connections which would give them genuine meaning.

"Coup d'Etat" is written vividly, with flashes of wit here and there, and this explains the *succès de scandale* the book has achieved in Europe. The author, the Italian Fascist Curzio Malaparte, candidly confesses:

... the object of the book is not ... to discuss the political, economic, and social programs of the conspirators, but to show that the problem of conquest and defense of the state is not a political one, that it is a technical problem ... that the circumstances favorable to a coup d'etat are not necessarily of a political and social order and do not depend on the general condition of the country.

In another passage he points out that the technical problem consists in getting hold of the most vital arteries of the nation's economic life—the railway stations, postal and telegraph services, ports, power plants, gas works, and water mains.

History is thus made very easy. The disintegration of the Czarist army, the misery and destitution of the masses, the desire for peace, the land hunger of the peasantry, the growing disappointment of the industrial workers, as expressed by the growth of Bolshevik influence in the Soviets, the struggle for

power between rival groups of the revolutionary intelligentsia—all these factors can be summarily dismissed. The coup d'état of November, 1917, succeeded because Trotsky knew how to apply the right technique. The author stresses his argument with numerous "quotations" for which he gives no sources. During his struggle against the opposition, Stalin, according to Malaparte, referred to Trotsky as "a wretched Jew," and Trotsky, nothing daunted, called his rival "a miserable Christian." Just like that.

In the light of the fact that Trotsky's technique of the coup d'état is so easy to understand, and, according to Malaparte, so easy to apply anywhere, one wonders why those tactics were not employed successfully by the Italian and Polish Communists in 1920, or by the German Communists between 1919 and 1923, and finally by Trotsky himself in 1926-27? Since Signore Malaparte dismisses political and economic circumstances as determining factors, he is forced to find other explanations. The Germans and Italians—well, they simply were "ignorant of the methods, the tactics, and the modern technique of the coup d'état of which Trotsky had given a new and classic example." The Polish Communists understood Trotsky, but being mostly Jews, they did not have the guts. This applied also to Trotsky's followers during his struggle against Stalin.

Only Mussolini knew how to apply Trotsky's tactics. But there is a little hitch in Malaparte's epic picture of Benito's rise to power—that is, aside from his always too obvious embellishment of historical facts. The author says modestly that "it is not known" why the King refused to sign an order establishing a state of siege when the March on Rome was started. Malaparte knows that Madame Kollontai loved the sailor Dybenko "for his transparent eyes and for his cruelty"; but he does not know, that is, he affects not to know, what every historian knows, that the Italian Army Command, which hoped to establish a military dictatorship, was conspiring with, and giving all the necessary assistance to Mussolini, who, of course, later double-crossed his allies, as he double-crossed all his other associates. All of which was not exactly identical with Trotsky's "technique."

Despite his often grotesque distortions of the Russian events, the author is actually much less severe with the Bolsheviks than with the heroes of the counter-revolutionary coups d'état outside of Italy. But he is much too cautious to give more than a faint hint of the actual class origin of his contempt for Kapp, Primo de Rivera, Pilsudski, and Hitler.

The fact of the matter is that the so-called "fascist" coups d'état in the other countries can hardly be said to have revealed very much in common with the Italian brand. Mussolini and his original following of adventurous dissenters from the various radical and revolutionary groups, mostly déclassé intellectuals, ex-workers, and war veterans, had placed themselves at the disposal of the manufacturers, financiers, and land-holders for the double purpose of cowing the workers and destroying all the organizations headed by their former rivals in the radical camp. Having finished the job, they had no inclination to step aside as dismissed bullies who were no longer needed. They established a dictatorship of the fascist section of the intelligentsia over both workers and capitalists (and the rest of the population, for that matter)—ready to seize their former backers rudely by the throat whenever such a gesture was necessary for the maintenance of their own power. Neither the Kapp nor the Rivera dictatorships had anything in common with this essential feature of a fascist regime. Both the German and the Spanish coup meant simply the reestablishment or the strengthening of the old Junker and militarist rule—with the famished intellectual "outs" altogether removed from the picture. Pilsudski's coup of 1926 was likewise a purely military and quite "respectable" affair, while Hitler, in the opinion of Malaparte, is merely a hired agent in the service of the

German manufacturers and Junkers—with no actual intention of reaching out for an exclusive fascist dictatorship, Italian style.

Malaparte's chapter on Hitler contains some very caustic and challenging remarks about dictators in general. It is a reasonable conjecture that the bitter sarcasm of some of these passages was aimed not exclusively at the eloquent Austrian yokel. The author no doubt was out to vent his spleen at the incomparable Master, Mussolini himself, who is apparently more feared than loved by his immediate entourage.

Malaparte has been known in Italy as an author of a volume of fascist lyrics. If in this line of his endeavor he has shown as much imagination as in his treatment of historical facts, he has done his country a great wrong by deserting the muses.

MAX NOMAD

"Faust" a Hundred Years After

Faust: Parts One and Two. by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Translated by George Madison Priest. Covici-Friede. \$5.

OUTSIDE of Germany Goethe is known chiefly as a human figure; the art disappears behind the man. So it is with Leonardo, outside of Italy. But in the latter's case it is time that has withered and destroyed the Florentine's works of art. In the case of Goethe, it is not time but the translators that have withered and destroyed them.

Germans have had Shakespeare in the thoroughly adequate translations of Wieland and the Schlegels; but English and American readers have had "Faust" only through Bayard Taylor's funereal version or the equally stilted and lifeless attempts of half a dozen other scholars. It was the misfortune of "Faust" to become from the very start a prey to the dust-grubbing professoriat; the peculiar complexity and the philosophical breadth of the whole called into existence an exclusive "Faust" cult which has continued for a century to approach this Teuton Bible with fear, trembling, and footnotes. From the beginning the work was embalmed and enshrined; and today in all countries but Germany it is almost as sublimely unpopular as Joyce's "Ulysses."

George Madison Priest is a professor of German; but that fact has not prevented his writing perhaps the one really readable translation of "Faust" available today. He has not tried, indeed, to break with the tradition of meticulous and scholarly interpretation; nor has he modernized or jazzed up the text; but at the same time he has won a frequent freedom in his English equivalents to Goethe's packed lines which sets him well apart from his predecessors. He follows the German meters, as Taylor did; but he has far more understanding of the free *Knittelverse* of the opening passages, and his rendering of Goethe's difficult dimeters and trimeters has a true musical and verbal effect. He handles Gretchen as the fresh and eloquently simple small-town girl that Goethe made her; not as the mincing Boston debutante of Taylor's version. The translation of such great descriptive passages as "Vom Eise befreit" is vivid and sensitive; the rendering of many difficult philosophical stanzas in Part Two is safely grounded on the interpretations of the best analysts of Goethe's thought.

But even with these general excellences of rendering, much of the vitality of the original work is lost in the translation. In the first place, Professor Priest sees fit to translate the German *du* and *Ihr*, which are intimate and direct, into the English "thou" and "ye," which are stilted and obsolete. From Goethe's typically undecorated and everyday human vocabulary we pass into a realm of elaborate literary circumlocution. The strong and immediate emotions of "Faust" are translated into

a cloaked Quaker language. Immediately the drama loses half of its vitality. And Professor Priest continues this emasculating process by using endless grammatical inversions to equalize the length of his lines exactly with the German, or by stuffing them up with such rhetorical garbage as "e'en," "forsooth," "ere," "o'er," "fain," "fore," "ne'er," and the schoolboy constructions which use "did see" when they mean to say "saw."

Professor Priest's version will be a joy to those American readers who have despaired of ever getting through Taylor, and who still suspect that "Faust" is not entirely dust. But it will not make Goethe's drama a compelling reality to those many people who lack an elaborate preparation in classroom methods of interpreting and devitalizing the masterpieces of the world. Until a translator can do for Goethe what Scott-Moncrieff did for Proust or what Constance Garnett did for Dostoevski, the English "Faust" will remain a mere solemn exercise in cultural history—a thing difficult to defend when bright young Communist critics try to throw it in the ashcan.

WILLIAM HARLAN HALE

Amber-Tinted Elegance

The Chinaberry Tree. By Jessie Fauset. Introduction by Zona Gale. Frederick A. Stokes Company. \$2.

FOR once, a book has been advertised too modestly. "The Chinaberry Tree" has been recommended by its publishers, and by Miss Gale, its sponsor, as a revelation of the life led by educated Negroes. But it is considerably more than that. Though faulty, it is the work of a remarkable psychologist who can be congratulated not simply because her material is interesting but because she has understood so well the human factors involved in it.

The greater portion of "The Chinaberry Tree" is devoted to the love affair of two colored high-school students who do not know that they are brother and sister. This dramatic theme, singularly enough, is the least exciting part of the story. We learn most about Miss Fauset's book as a whole not through Melissa and Malory, or their narrowly averted incestuous marriage; but through Laurentine, the beautiful apricot-colored dressmaker who is the book's real heroine and symbol of the world it depicts; Laurentine, who sat as a child under the Chinaberry Tree and wondered why other children, either white or black, wouldn't play with her.

The best part of the story lies in the background. Colonel Halloway, a wealthy white factory-owner, while still a college student falls in love with his mother's Negro maid. He marries a white woman, but his real love is given to the colored girl, whom he handsomely establishes in a white house with green shutters, a well-kept garden, and the Chinaberry Tree. His daily visits to her are concealed from no one. Their love is a scandal to both black and white inhabitants of the Jersey town. And Laurentine is their child. She is brought up in comparative luxury, but is a double outcast. And the passion which animates her is closely allied to the passion which animates the book. What does the illegitimate mulatto grow up to want? Respectability. Once she cries: "Oh God, you know all I want is a chance to show them how decent I am." This might serve as the motto for "The Chinaberry Tree." It is so much the book's real theme that once recognized it helps to explain the striking gentility of certain passages, as well as the exceptional importance attached to small material comforts that most white people would take for granted. The sympathetic white reader, once he appreciates the difficult position of this refined colored girl, by transferring an allied psychology to the book itself will perceive the drama beneath even such a line as "The food was wholesome, well cooked, and attractively gar-

nished." It is a world in which such little things mean much: a touching world, its humility displayed through its pride. The book attempts to idealize this polite colored world in terms of the white standards that it has adopted. And here lies the root of Miss Fauset's artistic errors. When she parades the possessions of her upper classes and when she puts her lovers through their Fauntleroy courtesies, she is not only stressing the white standards that they have adopted; she is definitely minimizing the colored blood in them. This is a decided weakness, for it steals truth and life from the book. Is not the most precious part of a Negro work of art that which is specifically Negroid, which none but a Negro could contribute?

We need not look far for the reason for Miss Fauset's idealization. It is pride, the pride of a genuine aristocrat. And it is pride also that makes her such a remarkable psychologist. However many her artistic errors, Miss Fauset has a rare understanding of people and their motives. I suppose there is no better way to come to understand others than to be extraordinarily sensitive one's self. Every great psychologist has been a thin-skinned aristocrat. Considering the position of a sensitive, educated Negro in America, it is no wonder then that an aristocrat like Miss Fauset has idealized her little world, has made it over-elegant! Inspired by the religious motive which so many Negro writers seem to feel, she has simply been trying to justify her world to the world at large. Her mistake has consisted in trying to do this in terms of the white standard.

"To be a Negro in America posits a dramatic situation." Yes, and to be one of Miss Fauset's amber-tinted, well-to-do, refined Negroes—not having to deal much with whites, but surrounded on all sides by the white standard—posits a delicate psychological situation. It is for this reason that few white novels have anything like the shades of feeling to be found in "The Chinaberry Tree." Every moment speaks of yearning. That is why, once it is seen as a whole, even its faults are charming, for the story they tell is poignant and beautiful, too.

GERALD SYKES

Our Economic Muddle

Is Capitalism Doomed? By Lawrence Dennis. Harper and Brothers. \$3.

Money for Tomorrow. By W. E. Woodward. Liveright. \$2.

NO American writer has dealt more brilliantly or provocatively with the flaws and absurdities of our economic order than Lawrence Dennis. While most economists are busying themselves with the question of maintaining the volume of credit and preventing a repetition of the speculative orgy of 1928-29, or are seeking to correlate production and consumption, Mr. Dennis challenges the fundamental assumptions upon which modern capitalism rests—the possibility of obtaining speculative profits by "judicious investment" and the practicability of compound interest over an extended period of time. We have all been hoodwinked, he assures us, by "the fallacy that money can be made by investment selection or stock trading"; a truly scientific investment policy would seek to approximate the average return on all invested capital—about 3 per cent.

Sooner or later, Mr. Dennis believes, the combination of credit inflation and compound interest is bound to bring capitalism to its knees. As long as credit does not outrun real wealth, no particular hazard is confronted; but as the economic structure ages, the burden of indebtedness begins to weigh more and more heavily upon the productive forces in society. The deflection of too large a portion of the national income into the pockets of the well-to-do classes leads to overexpansion of factories and other productive units, while the relative decline in

purchasing power of the working class reduces the demand for the aggregate output. The fate of agriculture during the past decade may be taken as a case in point. The farmer's misfortunes have not come, as is often asserted, because he has not been business-like enough, but rather because he has attempted to transform agriculture into a "business" by capitalizing it upon the basis of potential profits.

The section on foreign investments is in itself worth more than the price of the book. Written prior to the investigation of the Senate Finance Committee, it levels a withering fire not only upon the international bankers who foisted tremendous quantities of worthless paper upon a gullible public, but also upon American commercial policy in general, which sought to build prosperity on foreign trade which was supported solely by paper credit. As a substitute the author suggests widespread social expenditures financed by increased taxation. Even waste, in this sense, is held to be far sounder as an economic principle than savings accumulated in the hands of the few through public "economies."

Traditional critics will undoubtedly find many points at which they will disagree violently with Mr. Dennis. Nevertheless, they will find themselves very much on the defensive as regards his fundamental thesis, which after all is merely a twentieth-century version of Karl Marx. The book deserves a wide reading, and would probably have one if it were not for its unfortunate style. Written to provoke controversy, it is likely merely to antagonize less robust souls.

"Money for Tomorrow" is also Marxian in many of its broad criticisms of the capitalist order. Popularly written, it seeks to reveal the esoteric mysteries of economics to the man on the street. This approach may account for, although it scarcely excuses, a disregard for exact economic terminology, and the naive acceptance of some very dubious proposals for remedying the existing situation.

MAXWELL S. STEWART

Prisoner of War

Time Stood Still. By Paul Cohen-Portheim. E. P. Dutton Company. \$3.

I DO not pretend to know anything about the mental processes of a general. I have never met one except in print and there the processes resembled an actor's post-mortem on a play that has just closed its run. "It would have been a good show if I had had the lead. The rest were a bunch of hams." Nevertheless, I can imagine a general's feelings as he reads, reads about, or at least hears about the pacifist war books with their printings as big as army divisions. I can imagine him saying: "The trouble with this war—there were too many damned civilians in it."

In their greed for big armies, in their demand for conscription, the generals spoiled the good old trade. Citizens had no stomach for military glory when they starved on rations and cowered under the sky, deadly now with raiding airplanes. Either the civilians will stop the next war, if we can assume that common sense is really common enough; or they will be too much involved to support the general's army.

All civilians suffered in the last war, those at home along with those in the trenches. But the civilians who suffered most were perhaps those whom the outbreak of the war trapped in a hostile country. The war spirit, of course, is never very discriminating. Among the many thousands of Germans, Austrians, and Turks-by-statistics who were confined in the internment pens in England, were many who had settled in the country, had married English wives, and had English children; many, too, who were there through mere clerical errors which the authori-

ties were too busy, too suspicious, or too patriotic to rectify.

In "Time Stood Still," we are given a remarkably sane, judicious, and interesting report of what happened to the civilian war prisoners of England, by a writer who is restrained, tolerant, and sensitive. In fact, if the book fails in any respect, it is perhaps in being too tolerant. In the effort to keep it from being an indictment of the English people, his admiration for whom has survived his evil experience, he represses his emotions and mutes the horrors. He remembers that the same sadism and hysterics characterized the treatment of interned prisoners in his own country. But the few instances in the book where we can regret this repression show up as the defects of an undeniable virtue.

Mr. Cohen-Portheim was in London at the outbreak of the war designing costumes for the opera. A cultivated Viennese artist, at home in France and England, he had many English friends, among them people of influence. The latter did what they could to guard him from discomfort and humiliation but the propaganda against the "uns and biby killers" had done its work. His friends could not protect him and he was herded into an encampment in the Isle of Man. From here, when he had become acclimated and, by relative standards, comfortable, he was transferred to what was called a "gentleman's" camp, gentility being determined by the amount of money at the inmate's disposal.

The gentlemen included some few fourteen-carat aristocrats, but the mass were petty business men. The ineradicable love for distinctions worked itself out here and the three camps into which the three thousand men were divided soon established an aristocracy, a middle class, and a proletariat, or rather a Bohemia. What is even more astonishing, the barbed wire between them became as potent as international frontiers in developing within each group a definite nationalist psychology with patriotic illusions and hatreds. Deprived of any practical opportunities to hate a nation *de jure* they hated the nations *de facto* that lived in the neighboring barbed-wire inclosures.

The greatest miseries were the congestion which made privacy impossible; the celibacy enforced for four years; the idleness which induced a morbid search for hobbies and distractions; the constant supervision; and the destruction of the sense of responsibility. Each of these in turn elaborated other types of suffering. The congestion and want of privacy, for instance, resulted in psychopathic irritations with one's neighbors; celibacy resulted in peculiar neurotic friendships, although there was no overt, physical homosexuality. And to the general suffering each man added the morbidity of his personal tragedy. The English wives, for instance, turned one by one from their interned husbands. Patriotism made betrayal honorable. There were suicides and lunacies, and this dreadful level of misery was not even stable. It was disturbed by crises in the persecution, by regulations and the usual guard tyranny. Reverses brought revenges in the form of additional restrictions. The new rules were usually called reprisals against German atrocities. English public opinion was convinced that the Germans were torturing interned Englishmen, while they were coddling their interned Germans. Toward the end, the food stringency led to what was nothing less than gradual starvation for these prisoners.

By a high quality of interpretative insight, by philosophical detachment, and by the many resources of his sensitive and cultivated mind, Mr. Cohen-Portheim makes this terrible story continuously absorbing. These qualities, which he has already shown in his volume, "England, The Unknown Isle," give the incidents of the book extensions into every corner of our civilization. While it is not a work of genius like Cummings's "The Enormous Room," which gave an account of a French war prison, it goes far beyond that masterpiece in making clear the psychological corrosions worked by war upon every element of western humanity.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

Shorter Notices

Your Mexican Holiday. A Modern Guide. By Anita Brenner. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.50.

The American tourist is beginning to find Mexico, following the trail blazed a decade or more ago by writers, painters, and poets, who wanted, if not permanent escape, at least relief from the drab dulness of Coolidge prosperity, Volsteadism, and our machine-made civilization. An up-to-date guide book to supplement the recent prolific literature concerning our Southern neighbor has been needed. Terry's "Mexico," which was not without merit, has long since become obsolete and the "revised" edition was a transparent bit of publisher's racketeering. Now Anita Brenner, an American born in Mexico, who has lived there a large part of her young life, has written a superb traveler's *vade mecum*. Apart from its wealth of indispensable up-to-the-minute information concerning what to see, wear, eat, and drink, and how, it is packed with pertinent background material which within its limits helps to make the complexities of the Indo-Hispanic culture vivid and more intelligible. Virtually everything that any voyager to Mexico may seek—be it archeology, architecture, art, beer, crafts, fishing, hunting, mountain-climbing, music, primitive cultures, sea- or sun-bathing, *tamales* or *tequila*—is to be found in its well-ordered three hundred pages, supplemented by excellent maps and diagrams. Veteran and novice alike will be the better equipped for the Mexican adventure by the possession of this admirable little volume.

The Faraway Bride. By Stella Benson. Harper and Brothers. \$2.50.

The author of "The Faraway Bride" insists upon the parallelism of her book and the story of Tobit in the Apocrypha to the point of including the latter in an appendix. The acknowledgment was not, perhaps, strictly necessary; but knowledge of the source only adds to the distinction of the retelling. This time Tobit and the subsidiary characters are not Jews in a foreign land, but white Russians living the life of exiles in Manchuria and Korea. And out of this the author has constructed a comedy of extraordinary warmth and reality. The novel more than deserves the prizes that have honored its unusual distinction.

Tom of Bedlam's Song. With Introduction and Notes by David Greenwood. San Francisco: Helen Gentry.

There is no more amazing poetry than the almost divine poetry of madness, for as Mr. Greenwood says, "in imagination we go with them, whose whole selves are our half selves." And the best of the poetry of madness, as has long been known, is the prized but too little read Tom of Bedlam's song. There were many of these songs, most of them, of course, of little literary value.

For many years previous to the Restoration [writes Mr. Greenwood], Bethlehem Hospital was obliged from time to time to release certain patients who had no private income and who were not too dangerously insane to fare as they might in the world. These were the Toms of Bedlam, and, of course, they led strange careers. The common attitude toward madness being one of amused wonder, these roving lunatics gathered alms by being the song-and-dance men of their time.

The edition printed in this beautiful little book is a combination of the famous stanzas chosen by Alice Meynell along with certain others having the full flavor of beggars' slang and poetry. Here is the best possible grouping of the stanzas and a complete bibliography of all references to this prized song, sev-

eral passages of variorum, Francis Thompson's favorite stanzas, and many very illuminating notes on the text. The introduction by David Greenwood is a charming piece of critical prose. The illustrations have caught the full flavor of the poem, a difficult achievement. The illustrator exhibits a fine taste and subtle imagination. The book itself, hand-printed by Helen Gentry, is an artistic piece of work; it will be mentioned, probably, among the best of such books. As for the poem, it speaks for itself in such lines as these:

With a thought I took for Maudlin,
And a cruse of cokle pottage,
With a thing thus tall,
Sky bless you all,
I befell into this dotage.

I slept not since the Conquest.
Till then I never waked,
Till the roguish boy
Of love where I lay
Me found and stript me naked.

The Golden Mountain. Marvellous Tales of Rabbi Israel Baal Shem and of his Great-Grandson, Rabbi Nachman, Retold from Hebrew, Yiddish, and German sources by Meyer Levin. Illustrated by Marek Szwarc. Cape and Ballou. \$3.

Mr. Levin has cleverly linked together a handful of stories to furnish a legendary biography of the Baal Shem Tov, a pious and genial sage who was the founder of the Chassidic sect. To these folk-tales the author has appended several more literary narratives reputed to have been written by Rabbi Nachman, the great-grandson of the Baal Shem. The latter, weighed down as they are with a rather complicated symbolism, are less attractive than the legends which cluster around the elder saint, but they serve to emphasize some points in his teachings. The writing is generally simple and agreeable, the author attempting, not always successfully, to retain the folk character of the original. A helpful preface offers an introduction to Chassidism and its founder which should stimulate the reader to further explorations. The stoutest rationalist, if he can respond to poetry at all, must find a charm in these tales, each of which holds in its fantastic wrappings a kernel of spiritual truth.

The Indian Peasant Uprooted. A Study of the Human Machine. By Margaret Read. Longmans, Green and Company. \$2.50.

Last year (1931) a Royal Commission on Labor in India issued an eighteen-volume report of an investigation which had lasted about two years. This presented more material than any but the most specialized student would care to explore in full, and Miss Read has therefore summarized it in a small book, endeavoring to liven it up for the general reader. Industrial workers in India are persons squeezed out of village life by economic pressure rather than attracted by the profits of a new kind of labor, and their center of interest tends to remain in the villages. Although India is one of the eight great industrial countries of the world, her workers suffer all the evils of a young industrialism. No more striking fact could be mentioned in that connection than the infant-mortality rate in the city of Bombay, where cotton mills are numerous: during the year 1927 it was 319.12 per thousand (in 1921 it was 672.12). Some careless errors appear in the book, as on page 6, where cotton weaving and spinning are said to employ a total of 337,000 persons, of whom 118,000 are in Bombay City, 70,000 in Ahmedabad, and 232,000 elsewhere in the Bombay Presidency! To say nothing of those employed in other parts of India! The different industries are studied separately. The book is useful and will go a long way toward satisfying everyone but the sociological specialist.

Rural Russia under the Old Regime: A History of the Land-lord-Peasant World and a Prologue to the Peasant Revolution of 1917. By Geroid Tanquary Robinson. Longmans, Green and Company. \$4.

Rural Russia before 1917 was substantially all Russia. This book may be considered, therefore, a history of Russia up to the recent revolution, though it pays scant attention to the succession in the dynasty and the stumbling to greatness of the Russian Empire. It is a very valuable book, but unfortunately not a readable one. Mr. Robinson shows by instances throughout the book that he can write with distinction and charm. But the scholar too often interrupts the writer. Conclusions are obscured by qualifications; the narrative is halted by a constant discussion of sources and evidence. The rhythm approximates, not deliberately of course, that of the slow effort of the peasant to free himself from oppression. Mr. Robinson demonstrates convincingly how Czarism took for granted that it must live by oppression, always allying itself with a class that conceived its situation in the same terms. The abolition of serfdom in the 1860's was an attempt to help the landowning class, which suffered in international competition by the inefficiency of its slave economy. After the revolution of 1905 Czarism sought to strengthen itself by fostering a class of capitalist peasants. In this record of consistent class favoritism by the old regime is to be found the explanation for the vengeful class consciousness of the Russian people after the revolution of 1917.

The Paradox of Plenty. By Harper Leech. Whittlesey House. \$2.50.

One of the bright young newspapermen who, as the Federal Trade Commission's investigation revealed, helped along the propaganda work of the power trust, has written a book on the thesis that "this is not a depression, it is a mishandling of the greatest era of plenty the world has ever known." This realization synchronizes fittingly with the collapse of the Insull outfit which supplied this Chicago *Tribune* writer with some of the information which he then passed on to the public as his own. The book which, incidentally, is dedicated to one of the well-known high-pressure Insull publicity men, is a curious medley of shrewd observations and banalities. It shows the influence of the electrical environment and yet exhibits sufficient detachment to assert that "The Man of Prey is the authentic sire of capitalistic civilization. . . ." The author clearly has first-hand information on the subject. He concludes with a plea for "a simpler world." Anyone who has attempted to explore the mazes of modern public utility structures will second the motion.

Contributors to This Issue

ROBERT A. MACKAY, professor of Political Science at Dalhousie University, Halifax, is the author of "The Unreformed Senate of Canada."

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN is the author of "Why We Fought."

CONRAD AIKEN was awarded the Pulitzer prize in 1930 for his "Selected Poems."

JOSEPH AUSLANDER is the translator of "The Sonnets of Petrarch."

MAX NOMAD is the author of "Rebels and Renegades."

WILLIAM HARLAN HALE is the author of "Challenge to Defeat: Modern Man in Goethe's World and Spengler's Century."

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER is the author of "The Temptation of Anthony."



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The Cat and the Fiddle—Cohan—43 St. & B'way.

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